

The Autobiography of Increase Mather

EDITED BY M. G. HALL

WE STRETCH a point to call this manuscript an autobiography. Actually it is a combination of autobiography and political tract and journal, in which the most formal part comes first and the rest was added on to it as occasion offered. But, the whole is certainly autobiographical and covers Increase Mather's life faithfully. It was the mainstay of Cotton Mather's famous biography *Parentator*, which appeared in 1724, and of Kenneth Murdock's *Increase Mather*, which was published two hundred and one years later.¹ Printing the autobiography here is in no way designed to improve or correct Mather's biographers. They have done well by him. But their premises and purposes were inevitably different from his. The present undertaking is to let Increase Mather also be heard on the subject of himself. Readers who wish to do so are invited to turn without more ado to page 277, where they may read the original without interruption.

For those who want to look before they leap, let me remind them of the place Increase Mather occupies in the chronology of his family. Three generations made a dynasty extraordinary in any country; colossal in the frame of

¹ Cotton Mather, *Parentator. Memoirs of Remarkables in the Life and Death of the Ever-Memorable Dr. Increase Mather* (Boston, 1724). Kenneth B. Murdock, *Increase Mather, the Foremost American Puritan* (Cambridge, 1925). Since 1925 three books bearing importantly on Increase Mather have been published: Thomas J. Holmes, *Increase Mather: A Bibliography of His Works* (Cleveland, 1931); Samuel E. Morison, *Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936); Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge, 1953).

New England history: Richard Mather (1596-1669); Increase Mather (1639-1723); Cotton Mather (1663-1728). Here was overlapping but no overshadowing. Each was a man of peculiar genius and unique influence on his society. In the same breath it is necessary to assert that each was a product of the age in which he lived. Increase Mather was certainly not typical but his autobiography is a representation of both the individual and his times.

The autobiography consists of three parts. Mather finished the first part on Christmas Eve, 1685, when he was forty-six years old. He wrote the second part in August, 1694. The third part is a succession of entries in journal form which occur irregularly from 1694 to 1715.

Part one is a conventional seventeenth-century Puritan autobiography drawn up by a man past middle life for the instruction of his children, particularly that the example of his religious experience may help them to lead sanctified lives.² Thus Mather's autobiography begins with the salutation, "dear children," and comes to its real close on page 314 with these sentences: "Thus have I related the story of my owne life for more than 46 years. . . . And I have done it for my children, that so they might sett their hope in God." Unfortunately Mather could not restrain himself from adding paragraphs about each of his children and further paragraphs of select examples of religious fervor taken bodily from his diaries. The critical years in his own religious life had come in 1671-72, and it was in terms formulated then that Mather finally closed this didactic, devotional letter to his children.

This first part of the autobiography is the hardest for modern ears, because it is cast in an archaic style, and because it is essentially devotional reading. Once over these

² See, for example, "Autobiography of Thomas Shepard," Colonial Society of Massachusetts, *Publications*, XXVII (1932), 345-400.

hurdles the reader has two rewards. One is the story of Mather's life as he saw it himself. We today with all the disadvantages of hindsight find it hard to believe that Increase Mather could ever have turned out other than a devout Puritan or the champion of Massachusetts Bay Colony. Yet such possibilities were real enough to him. We can only appreciate the story when we forget that we know how it will end. The other reward is to read with what unflagging self-analysis this man tested out his faith and how he came at last to believe.

The second part of the autobiography is nothing like the first. It is not devotional reading but political reading; its purpose was not to instruct in piety but to justify Mather as politician and statesman. In 1688 Mather had made a hair's-breadth escape from an unfriendly government in Massachusetts. He fled to London where he importuned King James on behalf of the dissenters in New England. When James ran before William of Orange, Mather rejoiced and importuned William. Then he importuned Queen Mary, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Quaker William Penn, and indeed every man and woman with influence at court whom he could reach. What came out of all this was the Massachusetts Charter of 1691, which in turn became the pivot of Massachusetts politics. When Mather returned to Boston he entered into a bitter feud with the country party under the leadership of Elisha Cooke. Since Mather had spent liberally in London, he petitioned the General Court for a return on his expenses. The second part of the autobiography was written at this time and with these political objects in mind. Sometime later it was attached to part one.

In form this second part consists of numbered paragraphs, one through twelve (five is missing), in which Mather took up certain topics: 1. escape from Boston; 2. voyage, ar-

rival, first address to King James; 3. relations with Roman Catholics at court; 4. important men and women interviewed; and so forth. It is not introspective like the first part, but is packed instead with names and dates and so is rich fare for the historian. Towards its end this part contains Mather's own simple and straightforward remarks about the Salem witchcraft trials, which were in full swing when he returned to Boston. He more than any other person brought those trials to a stop.

When Increase Mather added part two to what he had written a decade earlier, he had to write a transition between the one which ended in 1685 and the other which began in 1688. This transition, taken, as is so much of it all, from his diaries, occupies pages 319-322.

October, 1696, seems to be the most probable date for the first of the miscellaneous entries which make up part three. The next entry, written in 1703 and covering the years 1700-1703, describes his bitterness at being ousted from the presidency of Harvard College. Even Increase Mather, however, mellowed with age—not much, but some. A long entry written in June, 1711, when he was 72 years old, is a summary of all that had gone before, an autobiography in miniature. The anxieties of early years, the ambition and querulousness of middle life were gone, and in their place had come a gentle thankfulness for the blessings of a full life—a strange mood for Mather and one not continued in the few entries which follow. The autobiography thus assembled from diverse parts ceased to interest him, and soon the manuscript peters out in the present tense amid the grumblings of the ancient but headstrong divine.

In its physical appearance the manuscript of the autobiography is an unruled notebook of twenty-seven leaves sewn together without cover and measuring about seven by eight inches. Into it has been sewn the additional eleven

leaves which make up part two. The pages of this insert are numbered independently. Several leaves are mutilated by being cut with knife or scissors.³

The text given here, although it is the first to be printed, is the culmination of a succession of publishing endeavors. First credit goes to Rev. A. P. Marvin, who prepared the transcription from which this and two intervening texts descend. Marvin came in the 1880's from nearby Lancaster, Massachusetts, to browse in the American Antiquarian Society's library. He was fascinated by the manuscript autobiography and asked permission to copy excerpts. Permission granted, he went on to the difficult task of making a full transcript. Several years later Marvin asked permission to incorporate quotations from this transcript in an article he hoped to publish. The Society refused permission and expressed undisguised displeasure that he had made the transcript at all. Marvin thereupon proved himself the gentler party by voluntarily giving to the Antiquarian Society his only copy of the autobiography.

The next scholar to edit the autobiography was Worthington C. Ford, editor of the Massachusetts Historical Society from 1909-1929. Ford used Marvin's transcript. He had the whole typed just as Marvin had written it out, then made pen-and-ink corrections as he compared it with Mather's original. Next came Allyn B. Forbes, editor for the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, and later Director of the Massachusetts Historical Society, who planned to publish the autobiography and the extensive Mather diaries together. He had the new text re-typed, thus incorporating Ford's corrections into Marvin's text. Then Forbes compared this to the original and made further

³ The manuscript is in the possession of the American Antiquarian Society. I am much indebted to the staff of the Society for frequent and generous help, and to Walter M. Whitehill, who made available to me existing typescripts of the autobiography. A grant from the American Philosophical Society in 1959 provided financial support.

corrections. Finally has come the present editor. The reader will readily surmise that I have made yet another typescript combining the corrections of both Ford and Forbes, and then myself compared this with the original. When I assure the reader that Marvin's text has stood up well, that ninety-five *per cent* of the changes in successive texts have been occasioned by changes in the fashion of historical editing, he will at once see that the lion's share of credit must go to Marvin, the mouse's share to me. Yet such is the world's way that I, of course, take full responsibility for errors.

The attempt to turn into print a manuscript never intended for a typesetter's eyes poses almost insurmountable problems. A choice—rather a thousand choices—must be made between idiosyncrasy and intelligibility. Mr. Marvin put everything into modern, properly-spelled English. Messrs. Ford and Forbes returned it all to Mather's spelling. The latter meant archaic forms like the thorn and Mather's individualistic abbreviations, which are legion. In a bow to the school favoring intelligibility Ford and Forbes spelled out the longer or the less common abbreviations, but also put brackets around the additional letters, thus: arg[umen]t. In the present text I have replaced the thorn with "th"; all abbreviations have been expanded without comment or brackets; but Mather's spelling, capitalization, and punctuation have been retained (except that periods have sometimes been introduced at the end of sentences, and each sentence is made to begin with a capital letter).

References to the Bible and dates have been reproduced exactly. Mather used the old style in which March 25 was the first day of the year. He abbreviated "month" to "m" and "day" to "d". So, 10m. 8d. means December 8, and 11m. 1674 means January 1675. He used the Latin abbreviation "li" instead of the modern £, and the Latin preposition *dè* with a grave accent to mean "concerning." But

by and large Increase Mather wrote pure English, and the reader will find fewer non-English ornaments here than in most similar works of today. This editor has been inordinately perplexed at what to do with "ct" for "Christ." (The College in Cambridge, on the other hand, always got a capital "C" from Mather.) I have at last chosen to be inconsistent and use capitals for Christ and God, believing as I do that the virtues of consistency are limited.

The Autobiography

for my children.

dear children.

[You] are all of you so many parts of my selfe; and dearer to me than [all the] things which I enjoy in this world. Wee must not live together [lo]ng here below. But if wee shall meet in Heaven and be forever with the Lord, that's happiness enough. I am not alltogether without hope concerning my owne Interest in Christ. I have thought that the relation of what the Lord has done for your Father, and the wonderfull experience which hee has had of Gods Faithfullness towards him, might be a meanes to cause you to give yourselves entirely to the Lord Jesus, and to endeavor to walk with God. If you live to him here, you shall live with him in another and better world. I charge you to follow me so farr as I have followed Christ. And then death shall not make my separation from you to be eternal. Now concerning my selfe, I give you a true (and nothing but the truth) Narration of the Lords dispensations towards me in what is here expressed.

I was born at dorchester in New England June 21. in the year 1639.

My Father was a faithfull and eminent minister of Christ, who left england because Hee durst not conform to the Common-

prayer Booke and the superstitious worship required therein. God gave to my Father six sons, four of them were ministers. I was the youngest and least amongst all my brethren. My mother was a very Holy praying woman.⁴ She had a peculiar love for me, and her affection caused her to be the more earnest in prayer to God for me day and night. I remember she has sometimes sayd to me, when I was a child, that she prayed but for 2 things on my behalfe, first that God would give me grace, secondly that Hee would give me learning: both which she told me, she was perswaded God would do for [me]. And said to [me,] if God make thee a good man and a good Scholar, you hast a[ll that] ever thy mother has prayed for on thy behalfe. Moreover, when my mother lay on her death bed, she d[id with] much affection exhort me to resolve (if the [Lord] should see meet to continue my life) to serve [God] in the work of the ministry; and desired me to [consider the] Scripture Dan. 12. 3. *They that turn many to Righte[ousness] shall shine as the stars forever and ever.* And these were the last words which my dear and precious mother spake to me, the remembrance whereof has had no small impression upon my spirit. I was then allmost 16 years old.

I lived in my Fathers Family 12 years. I learned to read of my mother. I learned to write of Father, who also instructed me in grammar learning, both in the Latin and the greeke Tongues. But when there was an able schoolmaster in dorchester, I was sent to him. I have often wondered how it came to pass, yet so it was, though I am naturally of a dull wit, and in my childhood (until I was 14 years old) I had no love to, nor delight in my Bookes, yet I was much forwarder in learning than any Boy in the school of my age.

In the latter end of the year 1651 I went to Cambridge in New England to be admitted into Harvard Colledge; and was there admitted in the 12th year of my age, and next to my elder Brother placed the senior of the class.

After I had lived in the Colledge about halfe a year, my parents being tender of me, and fearing that the Colledge diet would

⁴ Katharine Holt, who married Richard Mather in England in 1624.

not well agree with my weake natural constitution of Body, they sent me to Ipswich Anno 1652 to live under the roof and be under the constant inspection and instruction of that godly learned divine Mr John Norton.⁵ When Hee [. . .] removed from Ipswich to Boston (which was in April 1653) I came with him, and continued for several years as his pupill here in Boston.

In the year 1654, the Lord in mercy visited me with a sore disease, which was apprehended to be the stone, but I suppose it was a spice of the strangury, occasioned by sharpness of urine. By the use of Cassia, Mallows etc—I was soon (by the lords blessing) recovered. This sickness sett me upon prayer to God; and caused me to reform many vain, wild, courses, and extravagancies of my life. Also, from this Time I became very studious which before I had not bin. Nevertheless, after some moneths of Health I began to forget God again, though not so as in the former years of my childhood and vanity. But in the latter end of that year, viz. on March. 2. 1654/5, God tooke away my dear mother, who had so often prayed for me. About which Time the Lord broke in upon my conscience with very terrible convictions and awakenings. In the moneths of March, April, and till the latter end of May 1655, I was in extremity of anguish and horror in my soul. Once at dorchester when my Father was gone abroad on a publick occasion and not to return for a day or two, I shut my selfe up in his study, and there wrote down all the sins which I could remember I had bin guilty of, that lay as an heavy burden on my conscience. I brought them before God, and cryed to him for pardoning mercy; and at night burnt the paper which in way of confession I had sorrowfully spread before the Lord. Everyone observed that I was strangely changed. Some of my companions would deride me for my now preciseness and tender conscience. I acquainted no man with my Troubles, save only that I wrote some letters from Boston to my Father, telling him what anguish my soul was in, and desiring his earnest prayers to God for me. I wished for another opportunity to spend a day in secret prayer with

⁵ Norton was among the great scholars of the first generation of Puritan ministers in New England. He succeeded John Cotton in Boston in 1653. See "Translator's Preface" in John Norton, *The Answer*, trans. and ed. by Douglas Horton (Cambridge, 1958), ix-xxi.

fasting before the Lord, to humble my selfe for all my past Transgressions. I knew that on the election-day, the other scholars who boarded with me at Mr Nortons, would be from home; and therefore I resolved to spend that Time from morning to night where none but God should see. Accordingly I went into a little Garret over Mr Nortons study, and shutt the door. And all the Family being abroad, I poured out my soul in complaints before God that day, and cryed to God that Hee would shew me mercy. At the close of the day, as I was praying, I gave my selfe up to Jesus Christ, declaring that I was now resolved to be his Servant, and his only, and his forever, and humbly professed to him, that if I did perish, I would perish at his feet. Upon this I had ease and inward peace in my perplexed soul immediately; and from that day I walked comfortably for a considerable time, and was carefull that all my words and wayes should be such as would not offend God.

My standing in the colledge was such, as that according to the usual custome, I should this year have proceeded Bachelor of Arts. But the president being desirous to keep the students as long in the colledge as might be, and some other reasons occurring, our class (and some others also) were not suffered to Commence till the year after, which was a great Trouble to many of the overseers of the colledge, and occasioned (as I remember) no less than 17 of the scholars to remove from the Colledge. But my Father (though troubled at what was done) was not willing that I should take my Name out of the colledge Register (as some of my standing had done) and I submitted to my Fathers pleasure in it.

In the year 1656 I returned again to Cambridge, and there had my first degree. The Lord made me to profit in learning, and I hope also in spirituals, under precious Mr Mitchells ministry. Under the shadow of which I sat with great delight.

In Anno 1657 June 21. I preached my first Sermon, being that day 18 years old. My text was Gen 5. 24. I preached again at dorchester the next Lords day a Sermon from Isai. 9. 6 dè the excellency of Christ. The Lord was pleased to give great acceptance of my poor labors with serious christians; some did with many tears thank me and bless me.

My eldest brother *Samuel* (who was dear to me, and a man excelling in the gifts and graces of Gods Spirit) wrote to my Father encouraging him to send me to dublin, where my brother then lived. Now having my selfe a marvellous inclination and bent of spirit that way, I prevailed with my Father to give his consent that I should go for England. My Father as I tooke my leave of him, layd his hands over my shoulders, and wept over me abundantly (and so did I pour out Tears on him) and solemnly blessed me, and bad me remember my owne Sermon which I had preached the Lords day before; and told me that if hee should hear of me, that I approved my selfe Faithfull to Christ, the Joy of it would lengthen out his dayes, who was then 61 years of age. So wee parted, not expecting to see one another again in this world.

I sett sayle for London July. 3. 1657. And in 5 weekes God brought us safe to England. Wee put in at Portsmouth, from whence I rode to London. Augt. 24. I went from London for Lancashire, where I was very kindly enterteyned by my Fathers old friends and Christian acquaintance.

In September 1657 I sett sayle from Liverpool for Dublin, and in 24 hours passage, God brought me in safety thither. I had not seen my Brother for more than 7 years. Hee did not know me, but by the letters which I brought and discourse with him, Hee was easily convinced of my being his Brother; and enterteyned me with all the kindness that could be. Being in dublin, I entred my name into the Colledge there. In October (as I remember) I was taken sick with the meazells, and on November 19 with the small pox, but God was pleased graciously to spair my life.

In the year 1658 June 24 on the Commencement at Trinity Colledge in dublin, I proceeded Mr of Arts (being then 3 dayes above 19 years of age) Having first to good satisfaction performed the exercises, in Disputations, orations etc. required by the statutes of that Colledge. The proctor, and some of the Fellows who were episcopally inclined, gave me as much discouragement as they could or they durst do, by reason of my being a precisian,

and especially because I refused to comply with the usual Formalities of Hoods, caps, etc which all the other commencers (excepting one that was drawn by my example) submitted unto. Many of the scholars were so farr pleased with my exercises as that they did publickly *Hum* me; a vanity which I never saw practised before nor since; nor to any one but my selfe, who had least reason to looke for it. Nor did I, but was surprised with wonderment, when I heard the scholars (many of whom I knew not) begin their *Humming*.

The Lord gave me to find Love and respect amongst those that were serious and piously disposed in that Colledge. And most of all with dr *Winter*, who was then the provost of the colledge. His son (who proceeded Mr of Arts with me) tooke a singular phansy to me. I remember his mother in law told my brother, that her son, *Josiah Winter* was fallen in Love with me. But Hee is long since (I think 20 years ago) dead, though I am preserved alive, when my friend more likely to live (and better) than my selfe is gone.

The Fellows in that Colledge are chosen (as Vacencies happen) by the other Fellows; only it is in the power of the provost to chuse one. Hee was so very kind as to make me the subject of his choice, but I did not see my way clear to accept of it. Also, motions were then presented to me from diverse places, to come and preach the Word amongst them. A place called Marahfelt [i.e., Magherafelt] was settled on me by the Lord deputy and Council. I designed (with divine permission) to visit that place but after I had travelled 40 miles of my journey, I was taken sick at *Dundalk*, and thence was forced to return to *dublin*; and resolved for England again. The Lord deputy was so respective as to send me word, that I should not go for England for want of encouragement in Ireland whilest hee was in power, but the consideration of my Health not so well agreeing with the moyst Irish Air, having also an overture at that time presented to me by my Brother Naths. procurement from Sidwells in Exester [i.e., Exeter], made me to hold my Resolutions for England. And thither God brought me again in July 1658.

At London I came acquainted with Mr John How, who was then Chaplain to the Lord Protector. Hee perswaded me to lay aside my thoughts of Sidwells in Exon, and to go to great Torrington in devonshire, where hee had formerly lived. This overture I closed with, and spent the following winter in Torrington for the most part, only one moneth I continued with my brother Nathaniel who was then preacher at Barnstaple. But the protector dyed; and after that Richard was deposed, so that Mr How returned himselfe to his old people at Torrington. In the interim, Collonel Bingham, mr Ben of dorchester having recommended me to him, then Governor of Guernsey, sent me an invitation to be chaplain to the english garrison there. This motion I complied with, And in April 1659 transported my selfe into Guernsey. There I lived in Castle Cornet, and preached every Lords day, in the forenoon at the Castle, in the afternoon at the Town called petersport, where many French people who could understand English were my Auditors. Finding the Sabbath to be much profaned in that Island, I preached on the fourth commandment, (according to my weake ability) and the Lord was pleased to bless my poor endeavors, so as to cause considerable external Reformation in that particular, in that place, for some time.

During my abode in Guernsy some friends in England desired my return thither. A gatherd church in Sandwich by my brother Nathaniels influence on them, who once lived in that town, sent me a Letter with all their Names subscribed, inviting me to come to them in order to accepting the pastoral charge. Being returned to England hee that was then Incumbent (Mr. Thomas Dawson) wrote some [letters] to me which were very discouraging. I saw that if I went to Sandwich (according to my purpose) I should be involved in contentions there which was grievous to think of. In the mean while, a congregational church in the City of Gloucester, (Mr James Forbes the pious pastor of that church, especially labouring therein) procured for me a legal Title to a place in the city of Gloucester called St. Maries (in which church King Lucius, the first Christian King that ever was in the world lieth buried).

Thither God brought me in december 1659; during my Residence in that City, I lived with Mr Forbes, preaching in the forenoon at St. Maries, and in the afternoon at the Colledge (as they there call it) or Cathedral Church.

Here I was willing to have settled. But I saw a change of Times at the door. And as young as I then was, I did in that city Publickly preach and declare from Rev. 11.2. that further sufferings for the faithfull witnesses of Christ, were to be expected. Wherefore I returned again to Guernsey. I had not bin there many weekes, but the King and prelacy with him came again into England. When the King was proclaimed in Guernsey, I did out of conscience openly refuse to drink his Health which was urged upon me by some of the too much temporizing Clergy there, professing that I would pray for the Kings health but drink for my owne. Not long after this the king emitted a proclamation against debauched Health drinkers, which proved very advantageous to me.

Also, I refused to subscribe some papers which General Monk had sent requiring that all Commission officers should sett their names to them, the purport whereof was, that now wee beleaved the Times were and would be happy. Upon my nonCompliance the deputy Governor Captain Waterhouse which then was (who very much respected me) declined subscription also. The Chaplain belonging to Jersy (his name Ashton) who was a naughty and malicious person, going to London with his papers, informed the Duke of Albemarle that the reason why subscriptions did not come from Guernsey (as well as from Jersey) was because I had opposed it. Hereupon the Duke was incensed at me; and told the Governor then at London that I should be sent for to London. The Governor (Colonel Weaver) was of Monks appointing; and though I never saw him, God moved his heart to stand my friend, by which meanes I escaped the Trouble which in that matter I had bin threatned with.

My Salary whilest in Guernsey was 120 li per Annum. Every one thought that I should be deprived of the Arrears which were due to me. And the rather because a new deputy Governor (one

Capt Sharp, who pretended to Religion being a member of Mr Griffith's church as Hee said, but a dissembling Hypocrite, that would drink Healths etc.) did me secretly all the mischief that hee could; and returned the muster roll without my Name in it. Once my name was returned Crescentius Matherus whence the Commissioners had like to have deprived me of my Salary, supposing that Crescentious Mather and Increase Mather were not the same person. But when the Commissioners at London sat about paying off the Garrison on Guernsey, some objection being made that I was not present in the Island at such a Time, providence so ordered, that one Mr Martin a deacon of the French church in petersport, hearing of it, told the Commissioners that to his certayn knowledge I was at that Time in Guernsey, and offered to be deposed to the Truth of it. The issue was (which I have many a Time thought on with admiration) I was payed my arrears being 108 li and that before any other man belonging to the Garrison. The Atheisme of my heart was marvellously removed by this gracious providence which was a special Answer of prayer.

Sir Hugh Pollard being made the Governor It was now come to that, that I must either leave Guernsey or conform to the ceremonies of the church of England so that I tooke my leave of that Island March. 1. 1660; and the next day God brought me safe to Weymouth in dorsetshire. Thus was I persecuted out of two places, Glocester and Guernsey, before I was 22 years of age. During the moneths of March, April, May, June 1661 I abode partly at Weymouth, and partly in dorchester, preaching every Lords day, sometimes in one place, and sometimes at another accordingly as I was desired. Yea, many times I preached 3 or 4 times in a weeke, but received not any maintenance or recompense for my labors after my leaving Guernsey. Many Christian friends in dorsetshire were very desirous I should continue with them. I declared my willingness so to do, provided I might have the Assurance of a publick opportunity to preach the gospell, though without any maintenance. But this none could promise except I would conform. Some told me they could obtain for me

a living worth 400 li per Annum, if I would conform and read the Common prayer. But that I durst not do. I was desired to travell with some gentlemen beyond sea, but one obstruction or other still diverted. I was under promise to go with Mr Samuel Bellingham into Holland; but Hee being frighted with the noyse of a Massacre went for Holland before I could dispatch my affairs so as to reach London, and thereby released me of my ingagement. Having a great desire to see my Father, and hoping that I might for some time find a shelter in New England I resolved (with submission to the will of God) to return thither. Accordingly June 29. 1661, I sett sayle from Weymouth in dorset, in a vessell bound for Newfoundland, where we arrived in August. I tarried in Newfoundland but 10 dayes. There I found a New England vessell, and had cause to admire the good providence of God that a vessell should so opportunely present it selfe. The Lord brought me safe to New England September 1. 1661. and gave me to find my Father alive and in Health, which thing I had often prayed for. At the first sight of my Father I wept abundantly for Joy, which is the first and I think the only time that I ever wept for Joy.

Presently upon my Return to New England being by reason of my 4 years absence become like a stranger, and people are apt to run after strangers though they have little in them of real worth, many overtures of settlement were presented to me, viz. by dorchester, Boston, Plymouth, Barnstaple, Windsor, Guilford etc. I had invitations from no less than 12 places.

The first winter after my Return I preached one Lords day with my Father at dorchester, and the other Lords day at Boston to the congregation where I still continue.

March. 6. 1661/2. I changed my single condition, and was married to the then only daughter of Mr Cotton (being brought into acquaintance with her by meanes of my Fathers having married her mother) in honor to whom I named my eldest son Cotton.⁶

⁶ After his first wife's death Richard Mather married the widow of John Cotton. She brought to the Mather household her daughter, Maria Cotton, who then became Increase's step-sister and in 1662 his wife.

I apprehended that I might probably do more Service in my generation for Christ and for his people, by settling in Boston, than in any other place where I was desired. And for that Reason I continued here. I dwelt above 8 years in that house which was my Father Cotton's where also my wife and 4 of my children were born.

This church was very urgent with me to accept of office relation, but for several years I withstood that motion finding a great averseness in my spirit to comply therewith. I had also a great desire to return to England if liberty for Nonconformity should there be granted. The Brethren set a day apart to pray that God would incline my heart to accept of their call, after which I found in my selfe a greater willingness than formerly. It was some encouragement to me, that the Inhabitants as well as the church did by writing and subscribing their names signify their desires of my Continuance amongst them. May 27. 1664, I was ordained in the Teaching office, my Father and Mr Mayo⁷ imposing hands on me. Soon after my ordination, I was grievously molested with Temptations to Atheisme, whereby my spirit was much afflicted and broken. But God helped me out of those Temptations. The special thing which satisfied me, was, that I had experience of great Answers of prayer, whereby I could but see, that there is a God, and that Hee is a rewarder of them that diligently seeke him.

In the year 1669, the Lord removed my aged Father to his rest. Hee was taken ill whilest in my house, with a violent fit of the stone. But the next morning rode in a coach to dorchester, and dyed in about a weekes Time, To my unspeakable loss and sorrow.

About three moneths after this, my brother Eleazer dyed. His widow and some of his church sent very affectionate Letters to me, desiring I would visit them, and advise them in their bereavement. Out of very conscience to the will of God, and lest Hee should be angry with me, I tooke a Journey to Northampton. But when I had bin there a weeke, I was (Sept. 2. 1669) sur-

⁷ John Mayo was minister at Boston's Second Church. He invited Mather to become his junior associate.

prised with a violent feavor which brought me to the gates of death. The pain in my left side was extreme. A company of godly Christians met together to Fast and pray for my life; and on that very day God heard them, so that my grievous pain removed, and returned no more in any violence till my Recovery. How God dealt with me, and refreshed my soul in this sickness, I have written in a letter to Mr Mayo, on the backside of his to me, Anno 1669.

The Lord brought me home in a weake condition before winter. But after that acute disease, a Chronical one seyzed on me, viz. The Hypochondriacal affection, which made me unable to go abroad all that winter. But on March. 13. God restored me again to his service; and though very weak in body, I preached every Lords day from that time. It was apprehended by many that I should never be fully recovered out of that weakness. But I prayed much to the God of my life and Health, and he also enabled me by his Spirit to believe that Healing should be graciously vouchsafed to me in [his] owne good time. It was in the year 1665 that I preached dè the Jews conversion in Rom 11.26. I was then but 26 years old. Mr Caryl gave a farr greater character of that Book^s and of its Author than either of them deserved, viz. that such a measure of grace and learning did seldom meet together in the same person, much less in a young man as one might discern to be in the Author of that Book.

It is wonderfull to me that so judicious a man as Mr Caryl should be so greatly mistaken in that particular.

Before the year 1670 was expired, God restored my former strength unto me again. Only I was very much afflicted with Hypochondriacal vapors. I had now many serious thoughts in my Heart what I should do for God, and for Jesus Christ, who had bin so gracious to me. My Heart was sett upon it to do something for God beyond what hitherto I had done. The wishes of my soul I did express in writing before the Lord, Thus, January. 11. 1670: *The threefold wish of the chief of sinners. I wish! I wish!*

^s *The Mystery of Israel's Salvation* (London, 1669), Mather's first published book, composed of lectures delivered to his congregation on the subject of the millenium.

I wish! 1. That I might do some special Service for my dear God in Jesus Christ, before I leave this world. 2. I would feign do good after I am dead. I would feign leave something behind me, that may be doing good upon earth, when I shall be in Heaven. 3. After I have finished my doing worke, I would feign suffer and dy for the sake of my dear God, and for Jesus christ. Thus wished 11d of 11m. 1670.

I have experienced many strange meltings of Heart with respect to the accomplishment of these desires. On Febr. 24. after I had preached the lecture, praying in my study, and saying before God, "Christ has made requests in Heaven for me; else how am I alive this day? My being brought from the gates of death is because Christ has requested for me," my Heart was exceedingly moved within me. Also, I was then enabled to believe that God would Answer my prayers in upholding me yet a few years in his service, and giving me to accomplish the desires which had bin in my heart to advance his Name and Truth.

I considered with mysele that if I should write and publish my Fathers life, that would be a service not only honourable to my Father, but acceptable and honourable to the Name of God.⁹ And that by enquiring into those controversies which were the present Truth that these churches in New England laboured with, I might do a good service. And that preaching on, and printing some practical subjects would be so too; and that some discourses wherein the Rising generation should be especially concerned, might be made for Gods glory and the good of souls: And that by publishing something in Latin dè the glorious Kingdome which Christ shall ere long possess in the visible world, I might be instrumental in promoting the honor of the son of God. I therefore resolved by his help to sett upon doing those things. Only I thought it my duty to go about them with deep Humiliations, and seekings of the face of God in an extraordinary maner for Guidance and Assistance. Accordingly on March 22. 1670, I thus sett my selfe to seeke the Lord by Fasting and prayer before him in my study.

⁹ *The Life and Death of . . . Mr. Richard Mather* (Cambridge, 1670), is Mather's second published book.

Causes of Humiliation before the Lord

1. The sins of my unregenerate estate.
2. Failings since, in every place where I have lived, and in every Relation I sustain.
3. The sad divisions in Boston.

Requests to God in Jesus Christ

1. That Hee would furnish me with gifts and graces of his holy spirit, inlarging of me who am a narrow vessell, and filling me with Heavenly Treasure.
2. That Hee would give of his presence to be with me in private meditations and in publick ministrations.
3. That Hee would guide me as to endeavors in order to the accomplishment of the wishes of my soul written down I I D of I I m.
4. That Hee will please to bless and take care of my Family.
5. That salvation may be sent to his people. God has heard prayer, and does hear. In him I trust that Hee will hear. Amen! dearest Lord, Amen!

Concerning this day thus spent, I find recorded in my diary these words, "In the close of the day especially, my heart was moved to believe that God would accept of and Answer my poor prayers. 1. Because I drew nigh to him, therefore his blessings will draw nigh to me. 2. Because the things which I asked, and the end why I asked them was for Gods glory. Not for my owne sake, but for Gods sake. 3. For the honor of his son Jesus Christ. 4. Because nothing but my sins and abominations which this day I confessed before the Lord can hinder the Answer of my prayers; but these can not hinder because they are done away in the blood of Christ; who has loved me and given Himselfe for me, which I know for I feele my Heart loveth Him. 5. Because there never was any creature that did humbly seek unto the Lord for such blessings as this day I prayed for, that was denyed by him. And surely I shall not be the first whom God will deny. O blessed forever be my dear God in Jesus Christ who heareth prayer."

Again after the same way (by prayer with Fasting) I sought the Lord on April. 29. And on May 24. with hopes of gracious acceptance through Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, this year did not pass away without very exercising Temptations, whereby God humbled me, and made me more fit to attend the services which were in my Heart to do for his Name. I was sorely molested with the *ephialtes*. I had read in physitians that that disease was a sign that the person subject to it, should be taken with one of these 3 diseases, either 1. Apoplexy; or 2. An Epilepsy; or 3. A Mania. Now Satan set in with my melancholy to perswade me (though there was no ground for it) that this last would be my condition. The thoughts wereof filled me with inexpressible sorrows and fears. I had read, and was told by others, that mineral waters were an excellent Remedy for melancholy Hypochondriacal vapors, and all splenetic infirmities. Therefore, I went to the spring at Lyn, and tarried there some weeks, to see what might be done for my relief. One morning as I was alone drinking the waters, reviving my selfe under the Trees, I poured out my soul before God, and there mett with him. Dè which I have in my diary thus recorded. July. 1. 1671. "Being at the spring or mineral waters at Lyn, I there prayed alone under the Trees, and did humbly and believingly (through the Lords grace towards me) betake my selfe to God and to Jesus Christ for healing of my bodily distempers. I believed, because though sin had brought these distempers on me, yet God has accepted the sacrifice which Christ has offered for my sins. Also, because God had formerly heard my prayers. And because Christ has Redeemed my body as well as my soul. Jesus Christ intends to bestow eternal glory on my body as well as on my soul; and therefore hee will not deny unto me so small a matter as bodily Health, which is nothing in comparison of eternal glory. Also, because I desire Health for the Lords sake and not for my owne, viz. that I might do service for God and for Christ. After prayer, I went away inwardly rejoycing, because *I have prevayled! I have prevayled! I have prevayled for mercy!*"

On July 8. At the waters. There again the Lord enabled me with Tears and perswasion of a gracious Answer to pour out my desires before him both for bodily and spirituall Healing to be vouchsafed to me. My dear God in Jesus Christ will certainly accept of some Service from me, blessed by his glorious Name forever and forever. Amen! Amen!

Dark hours of Temptation followed these revivings. For the *Ephialtes* still attending me almost every night, melancholy fears returned and sorely oppressed me, against which I found the prayer of Faith to be the best Remedy.

July 22. As I was this morning sitting in my chair and expressing my desires and Faith before God that Hee would accept of Service from me, I was suddenly much melted and moved inwardly before the Lord, which surely was from his Spirit, and a confirmation of my Hope that God does intend to accept some Service from me.

July 24. As I was returning home from Lyn, at the end of the Town a poor godly woman, her name was Mansfield, desired those that rode with me to go forward, for she must needs speake with me. When I stopt, "O Sir (said she with much affection and Tears) I am troubled at my condition. I am afraid that I grieve the good spirit of God by not being cheerfull as I ought to be. I am dejected, and my soul disquieted, and when I meet with afflictions I lay them too much to heart; and I doubt I hereby offend so gracious a Father as God has bin to me, who has done much for me, and sometimes has manifested Himselfe to me." I was astonished to hear her speake, and to come to me for relief in her Temptations; And concluded that this poor woman (who little thought so her selfe) was a messenger sent of God to me; for she spoke to my very condition, as if hee that Knoweth all things had put words into her mouth. O let the great physitian of souls (said I then) looke upon me, and let him heal me, and give me power of grace to be more than a conqueror over my special infirmities. Amen! dearest Lord! Amen! This evening in my study the Lord enabled me to pour out thanksgivings and supplications before him with fervency and with love and Faith.

July 26. I was grievously assaulted with the *Ephialtes* in the night, so that I had little rest. The next day, I was in much distress and Anguish in my spirit, fearing lest all my Faith should prove phansy and delusion. In this distress I betooke my selfe to Christ, and wept before him, saying, "Lord Jesus, let me bee destroyed, if you canst find in thi heart to destroy a poor creature who above all things desires to glorify thi Name. Here I am before thee, do to me and with me what you wilt. If you wilt glorify thi selfe in my confusion thi will be done; I have deserved that it should be so. But Oh that you wouldest pity me." After I had thus cryed to the rock that is higher than I, I was somewhat revived. But the next day, I was sad and distressed beyond measure; I prayed earnestly and found some relief. The next day again, I was full of Anxiety and harried with Temptation; but I professed before the Lord Jesus that if the Tempter did fall upon me to destroy me, Hee should find me lying at the Feet of Christ, and will Christ suffer him there to destroy me? Also I promised before the Lord that if hee would bring me out of this distress, I would endeavor to carry it better in my Family, and in my publick Relation, and in all other respects. After this I had some succor, yet distressed still. That night God gave me comfortable rest and sleep, and the next day revived my sinking spirit, enlivening hopes I had, that by these terrible Temptations God would fit me for his service. I was melted at the apprehension thereof, which meltings were doubtless from the spirit of God.

August 1. In the night I was vexed with troublesome dreames, and forced to rise before day. So that I now again was ready to conclude that my *Ephialtes* would issue in a Mania. But I went to God, and expressed my humble confidence before him, that it should be otherwise, because hee heareth prayer, and because if this evil should come, those Truths of his which I have appeared for would suffer, and because I desired to improve my understanding to his glory, therefore hee will continue it, though my sins deserve otherwise. Also, the token for good, which the Lord gave me on the last sabbath was a supporting consideration to me. I read a chapter with Annotations (according to my wonted

maner) and after that again poured out my Heart with many Tears and groans before the Lord, for bodily and spirituall Healing. I said before God, "Lord, I submitt wholly to thi will, but if you shalt give me my choice, then Lord, I would say, kill me out of hand, rather than that this evill which I fear should come upon me. I had some perswasion that God heard my prayers, and beheld my Tears, because hee beheld the Tears of Hezekiah, and heard the prayers of weeping Jacob. And because there never was any one (I think so) that came to God with a desire of Health in a way of incessant prayer, and Fasting, and Faith; and that only that so hee might do service for God in Christ, and glorify his Name, that yet was denyed his Request. And shall I be the only one whom God will deny such mercy to?" Also, I that day begged of God, that Hee would give me leave to plead with him, (and with Tears and meltings of heart I did plead with him,) that if hee should not answer me graciously, others after my decease, that should see the papers which I had written and kept as remembrances of my walking before God, would be discouraged. For they would see and say, "Here was one that prayed for bodily and spirituall Healing, yea and believed for it also, and yet hee perished in his affliction without that Healing which hee prayed and believed for; and if but one man should read those papers, Hee would tell others, and then they would conclude that there is not so much in prayer, and that Faith is not such a mighty thing as the word of God sayth it is, so that prayer, and Faith, and the Name of God will suffer if I should not be heard crying to him." At last I came to this Resolution, *yea, though I dy for it, I am resolved to Trust in God for his salvation; and let come on me what the Lord will.*

The next day, I spent in Fasting and prayer in my study.

6ti. 2do. 1671.

Grounds of deep Humiliation

1. The sins of my unregenerate estate.
2. Sinfull failings in all places where at any Time I have bin.

3. As to every Relation I sustain, as a Father, Master, Husband, and most of all as a minister, I am guilty of great defects.
4. That body of sin which I bear about with me: pride, passion, sloth, selfishness, sensuality, earthly mindedness, unbelief, Hypocrisy.
5. Those afflictive melancholy distempers which do so threaten and at present prevayle over me.

Humble and earnest Requests to God in Christ

1. The chief ground of my thus setting apart this day, is to beg, that God would vanquish these melancholy distempers which are so afflictive to me, and revive my spirit.
2. That God would not only give but continue both bodily and spirituall Health to me.
3. That God would shew me, how I may improve my Health as shall be most for his glory, and the good of his people, and incline my heart accordingly.
4. That God would direct me as to those things which I am about, and which are further in my heart to do, and what portions of scripture to handle in my public ministry from Time to Time.
5. That Hee will furnish me more and more with gifts and graces of his spirit.
6. Bless my Family, and send a supply as to my outward wants.

Dè the confessions and supplications this day presented before the Lord, I have Recorded in my diary, thus, p. 135, 136.

"Some fervency and Faith in the performance of the duties of the day, so that I now wayt upon the Lord for a gracious Answer with a spirit much revived. I put the Answer of my prayers upon the sincerity of my soul before God, saying before the Lord, O my God, If I do not sincerely desire to glorify thi Name then deny my requests, and let me have no Answer of my prayers; but if I do in sincerity desire to serve and glorify thee, then have compassion on me, and deny me not, I pray thee. Upon these Terms let me go either with an Answer or with a denial.

"Therefore God will answer me graciously in his owne Time. O my soul, wayt you on the Lord."

Thus were these grievous Temptations overcome. Nor was I after this day, any more molested as formerly.

Sept. 17. 1671. In the morning I was melted in secret prayer, and believed that Christ will give me that bodily and spirituall healing which I have relyed upon him for. On Sept. 19. I have thus recorded. "Not so dejected as at many times. Still I believe that Christ will accept of Service from me the chief of sinners. If he will not, I dy praying and believing, and lying at his feet, having deserved that hee should reject me and my services the best of them being so very vile and sinfull."

January 31. Having set this day apart to humble my selfe and in secret to seeke the face of God in Jesus Christ, I experienced his gracious presence. So that at night I recorded in my diary as follows,

God has heard me. I know it. 1. Because though I am sinfull and my prayers and Fastings are so, yet God has heard me formerly, notwithstanding my sinfullness, therefore hee will do so still. 2. Because though I have sinned, yet Christ is my Advocate, and my name is surely written upon the breast of Christ, inasmuch as though I never saw him (except with an ey of Faith) yet my soul loveth him. 3. Because God hears those that desire to fear his Name; now I desire to be more broken hearted, more humble, more fervent, God knows it. Therefore hee has heard me. 4. Every one of those requests which this day I spread before God in Christ, shall be answered, because they are all things according to the will of God, and Christ has told me, that though I ask never so much, and never so great things, if they be according to Gods will, they shall be given to me.

May 8. 1672. I set apart that day to humble my selfe in secret as for other causes, so in special on the account of the death of my dear bother *Samuel*, the tidings whereof came lately to me. I find that I have thus recorded in my diary,

"In the beginning of the duty the Lord melted my heart: especially in the second time of my falling down on my Knees

before him, as I was praying that the Lord would remember the prayers which my precious brother *Samuel* had put up for me when hee was living in the world, and that Hee would give much of that spirit to me, which hee caused so eminently to rest on my now blessed brother, as I was thus praying my heart was exceedingly melted, and me thought, I saw God before my eyes, in an inexpressible maner, so as that I was afraid I should have fallen into a trance in my study."

This year outward wants and Family straits did exceedingly oppress me. And though it was in the power of the deacons of the church to have releevd me, they had no heart to do it, so that I was many times by grief very much hindered in my serving God. I can not express how much my spirit was broken with those miseries, and it is a wonder that I was not thereby nearly overthrown and made unfitt for service. Little do people think how much they wrong themselves, when they have ministers amongst them whose Hearts are sett upon nothing but their studyes and spiritual Employments, that nevertheless shall not be sutably provided for as to their outward subsistence, and that food and raiment which whilest they are on the earth they need as well as other men. I did for my owne Help record how it was with me, and what course I tooke under those pressing oppressing sorrows. I had no other way but to go to the Lord Jesus and make my moan before him, who I know was willing that I should be supported in his Service.

I did in the time of those Temptations Record as follows Diary p. 39—December. 30. 1672. Perplexed and hindred much in my studyes with the sad and sinking consideration of my outward wants, and that though the care and trouble of providing for the congregation lieth upon me alone, and I am thereby put to more expences than formerly, and more labor, yet there is not an Heart in sundry of my people to consider it. The Lord help me through my Temptations, enable me to Finish his work, and hasten me to Himself. When I am gone, my poor people will believe that the grief which I sustained by their neglects of me

and mine, was unprofitable for them. Nevertheless, there are some of them who respect me dearly, and do much for me.

Dec. 31. Exteably grieved and distracted in my studyes with the thoughts of my debts, and the consideration of my peoples (some of them) not caring for my deep sorrows in that respect. Methinks I could be content to be poor, I care not how poor, so as that I may be in a capacity to serve God without distraction; but to be in debt to the dishonor of the Gospell, is a wounding killing thought to me; yea so grievous as that if it be not remedied in a little Time it will bring me with sorrow to my grave. O Lord Jesus, pity a poor wretched sinfull creature, lest dishonor should come to thi dear Name!

January. 1. Spent in prayer with Fasting in my study. I closed all with this Resolution, "Lord, if you wilt provide for me, and Answer my prayers, I will love thee, and seek thee, and serve thee; and if you wilt not provide for me, I will love thee, and bless thee, and serve thee. If you wilt cast me off, I will not cast thee off. I deserve that you shouldst cast me off, but you, Lord, never deservedst ill at my hands."

January. 8. Miserably perplexed still with sad thoughts of my debts, and the unworthy spirit which is in some of my people, that have no Heart to relieve me in these my sorrows, and that think every thing too much for me, so that I loose (which kills me) much precious Time, and am exceedingly hindred in the Lords worke. The scripture bids ministers shew themselves patterns of patience and long suffering. Conscience of that has made me bear this long, but now I can bear no longer my grief is so extreme. If I be the Lords Servant, when I am gone, the Lord will make some of my people sensible of their neglects of me, though unworthy of any respect, in my selfe considered. O that the Lord Jesus who hears my Complaints before him, would either give an Heart to my people to looke after my comfortable subsistence amongst them, or if he has any further Service for me to do (who desire life only that so I might do something for him, who has done so much for me) remove me to another people who will take care of me, that so I may be in a capacity to attend

to his worke and glorify his Name in my generation, or give me a sufficiency of grace that these sinking evils and discouragements may not thus overwhelm me, or hasten me to Himselfe, where no Temptation shall keep me from serving him with freedom of spirit. O dear Lord Jesus! for thi name's sake pity, hear, and help. Amen. My Lord and my Redeemer. Amen!

January 10. This day pouring out my complaints into the boosom of the Lord Jesus, I begged of him that hee would not punish any of my poor people because of their neglects of me, but pardon them and bless them and that hee who heard my complaints before him, and knew the sorrows of my Heart, yea, and knew that I was therefore grieved at my outward wants because I was thereby hindred from doing him Service, and from glorifying his name, and the Name of the Father, and because I lost precious Time, of which I would not willingly loose any particle, That Hee would pity me when the world would not. After this my heart was eased, and I beleevd that the Lord Jesus heard me. Only I professed before him that I was content to be poor and in debt, and layd aside as a broken useless vessel, if so hee will have it; yea, to be any thing that Christ will have me to be. Now I am satisfied! The will of the Lord be done!

Now was the time come when God intended to send releef unto me. For Sr Thomas Temple,¹⁰ Captain Lake,¹¹ and some others of the Church understanding how things were with me, tooke effectual care for my supply. In the midst of these sorrows, I considered that (my afflictions and pressures notwithstanding) God had shewed me great kindness, having bestowed many special favors upon me a most sinfull unworthy creature, a catalogue whereof I drew up, and did as solemnly as I could prayse the Lord for them, on a day of thanksgiving. I did therefore this Record. November 19, 1672.

A Recollection of sundry of those special mercyes which I have cause forever to bless God for.

¹⁰ Sir Thomas Temple was Governor of Acadia until it was returned to France by the Treaty of Breda in 1667. Afterwards he lived for a few years in Boston, where he was a member of Mather's congregation.

¹¹ Thomas Lake, a prominent Boston merchant and member of Mather's congregation.

1. His gracious calling of me when I was but 15 years old, and at a Time when I was very vain and vile before him. 2. In that Hee has so orderd by his providence as that I have bin brought up in Learning. 3. In that he vouchsafed to employ me in the worke of the ministry. 4. In that his providence ordered my going to England, and Ireland, and Guernsey, which has bin a great mercy to me many wayes. 5. So has my Return to New England especially in that. 1. Here God gave me to find my Father alive, and to enjoy much communion with him for 7 or 8 years together. 2. Hee has cast my lot in Boston, the most publick place in New England where I have had a great opportunity to do service for God and Christ, (Oh that I had had an heart and ability to improve it!) 3. The liberty of my ministry at a Time when thousands of the Lords faithfull servants have bin deprived of that great mercy. 6. God have given me many Bookes and manuscripts, which have bin great Helps to me in his service. 7. God has blessed and Increased my Family. Hee never yet has taken from me one child, though hee has given me 2 sons and 3 daughters. 8. When several of my children (especially Nathaniel and Bettee) have bin sick and near to death, God has spared their lives, and restored them to Health again. 9. God has remembred me when I was brought very low both in body and in spirit, and has restored me to perfect Health again, and this in Answer to many prayers, yea solemn extraordinary supplications before him. 10. The Lord has vouchsafed something of his gracious presence with me in private Meditations and publick ministrations from day to day.

Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thi diseases, who Redeems thi life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and with tender mercys, who satisfyeth thi mouth with good things, so that thi youth is renewed like the eagles.

This year (1672) I was left alone in the Lords worke by reason that Mr Mayo through the Infirmities of old age did altogether

faile, and at last removed out of the Town, not preaching for several years before his death. I therefore thought it my duty to sett some dayes apart by Fasting and prayer, to seeke unto the Lord that Hee would be with me, and help me in his work, and also in due time send another to be with me, that should be a blessing to the congregation, and one in whom I might have comfort. It was now much upon my spirit, that I should in my publick ministry open and apply the Epistles of christ to the churches in the 2d and 3d chapters of the Revelation. For this also I set my selfe by Fasting and prayer to begg Assistance from Heaven in that undertaking, and I experienced much of the Lords presence with me therein for several years. And now my life was more comfortable than formerly it had bin. Yet was I much (more than I should have bin) exercised in my spirit about my son *Cotton*, lest the Hesitancy in his speech should make him uncapable of improvement in the worke of the ministry, whereunto I had designed him. But I have seen all my prayers dè that thing answered. I did set a day apart in my study, 1674, to cry unto the Lord for mercy in that particular, dè which I have in my diary thus recorded.

“October. 7. 1674. I fasted and prayed before the Lord because of my son Cottons Impediment in his speech. At the close of the day, I called him and his mother into my study. Wee prayed together and with many Tears beweyled our sinfullness, and begged of God mercy in this particular, and solemnly gave the child to God upon our knees, begging the Lord to accept of him. I can not but Hope that the Lord has heard me, and will in some comfortable measure remove this evill in his owne Time. However, whether God will hear me or no, I am resolved to Trust in him, and to wayt upon him for a gracious Answer, and so let him do with me and mine what seemeth him good.”

About this Time, considering the sins of the Countrey, and the Symptoms of divine displeasure, I could not rest in my spirit without giving Publick solemn warning of judgment near at hand. Therefore I preached and (at the desire of others) printed

two sermons on Ezek. 7. 7. *The day of Trouble is near.*¹² It was much in my thoughts that God would visit with the sword for the reason mentioned in my sermons on Rev. 2.16. in Lib. 32. P. 112. Afterwards I saw that those thoughts were from God. For in the year 1675 the warr with the Indians (which lasted for several years) began. During the warr Time, observing the murmurings of the people, and considering 1 Cor. 10.10. I was verily perswaded that God would punish that iniquity with some mortal disease, and accordingly I did in publick 3 times declare as much, which some were troubled at me for but the Lord confirmed the work spoken, by sending mortal feavors which were epidemical, and the small pox also whereby many dyed. And now the divine providence put into my hands special advantages for service amongst his people. I had opportunities of preaching to the Generall Court, and thought it my duty to stirr them up to endeavor a Reformation of provoking evils, by making Lawes for that end, and the Lord went along with the word so farr as that several wholesome laws for the suppressing of sin were thereupon made and published.

By reason of the warr it was much feared, that there would have bin a famine at least amongst the poorer sort of people. Dè which it pleased God that some letters of mine to Ireland, tooke such effect, as that a ship laden with provision was by some well affected to New England (amongst whom my brother in dublin was principally concerned) sent from thence for the poor here. Likewise, I did by letters receive above an 100 li in money out of England, and much clothing to be distributed amongst poor people in this Land. Let my children in this follow my example. Where they are not able to give and do good themselves let them excite others to do it.

In the year 1676 I was strongly possessed with fears that Boston would be punished with that judgment of Fire, so that I urged my wife to think of a removal from our habitation to some safer place in the Town, because if a fire should happen amongst the neighborhood, it was not possible my house should escape,

¹² Cambridge, 1674.

and then my bookes would be in great danger, the loss whereof would more afflict me than to be deprived of all other outward effects. These impressions were so powerfull upon me, as that I could not but preach a sermon on Zeph. 3.7. *I sayd surely you wilt fear me; you wilt receive instruction, (so their dwellings should not be cutt off,) howsoever I punished them.* Which sermon was delivered Nov. 19, 1676. Presently after I came home into my study, and was there walking alone, I was much moved before the Lord, using this soliloqui, *O Lord God, I have told this people in thi Name that you art about to cut off dwellings, but they will not beleeve me. Lord who hath beleevd our report. Nevertheless, O Lord God, that you wouldst spare them, if it may stand with thi Holy pleasure.* Thus did I walk weeping before the Lord in my study. The next Lords day in the night a dreadfull fire broke out in the street opposite to the house where I then dwelt. The houses Joyning one to another the fire could not be stopt, untill that street where it began, and that where I then dwelt was consumed with the flames, as also the publick meetinghouse and several other dwellings. It fell in my course (that very day before the fire layd wast the meeting house) to preach on those words Rev. 3.3. *Remember how you hast received and heard.* so that I preached a Farewell sermon though I was not my selfe aware of it. God remembred mercy in this judgment. For though my house was presently on fire, I lost only 80 books, but saved a 1000 and most of my manuscripts also, which mercy was so great, as that my other losses seemed little. And within two years God gave me a far better house. And now for the space of halfe a year I preached at the other meetinghouses in Boston, so that by occasion of this providence I had an opportunity to preach the Gospell to all Boston.

In the year 1677 my heart was carried out in earnest desires that I might improve my Time and Talents for Gods glory, and the good of his people. I therefore resolved not to allow my selfe above 7 hours in 24 (if so much) for sleep, and to spend the rest of my Time in attending to the duties of my general and particular calling. I considered of a method for the most profitable

improvement of my Time. I did then write down as followeth,

O dear Lord Jesus, you that knowest my workes, Help! Help! Help a poor creature, I earnestly beseech thee, to improve his Time as shall be most for thi glory, the good of thi people, and the Rejoycing of his owne soul, in *that day*, when I shall see thee my Lord, and when I shall speake with thee face to face. Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen!

My purpose (by thy help O Lord) is to spend my Time as followeth every day.

The 1 day of the weeke besides my public labors to attend catechising and personal instruction in my Family, as time shall permit.

The 2d day of the weeke A.M. to read a chapter with some commentator thereon. To study part of sermon. P.M. To read some Author, and study.

3d day. A.M. Read Commentator. Study sermon. P.M. Endeavor to instruct personally some or other at least in the summer Time. Read Authors.

4th day A.M. read Commentator. Study. P.M. Read Authors. study.

5th day. Read Commentator. Sermon. After lecture, To endeavor amongst the ministers to promote what shall be of publick advantage.

6th day A.M. read Commentator. study. P.M. Read Authors. study.

7th day. Read Commentator. Prepare for sabbath.

Only allowance must be given for visitations, and diversions or necessary avocations not foreseen.

This written down before the Lord. 31. of 8m 1677.

In this course I contined for some time. But at last so many unforeseen diversions came in upon me, that I was forced to alter the method of my studyes as to some particulars here sett down, never intending to bind my selfe by these Rules longer than I should find my selfe capable of attending thereto, or untill I should know a better method.

In the year 1679 A synod was called to meet at Boston to enquire into the causes of Gods displeasure against New England and scripture expedients for Reformation. Now God in his providence did both put respect upon me, and (which was farr greater mercy) gave me an opportunity for some peculiar Service to his Name. The Revd Mr Cobbet and my selfe were pitched upon to preach to that Revd Assembly in the Townhouse at Boston. Sept. 16. There were like to be great heats about the synodical Questions which had bin agitated Anno 1662. But the Lord favoured me so farr as to make me instrumental for the prevention of all differences, so that things were carried on with great unanimity. The conclusions of that synod together with the epistle dedicatory to the general Court were my composure. Had another drawn them up I have reason to think that all would have bin better done. The synod adjourned till July. In the meane Time, I prevailed with the people to which I am related, solemnly to renew their Church Covenant, in which thing I hope I was instrumental of some service both to Christ and to them.

May 12. 1680. The synod mett again in Boston to conclude on a confession of Faith. I found my selfe indisposed as to my Health before the synod sat. Nevertheless, considering there was some need of my being there, I resolved (by the Lords leave) to attend. The deputy Governor and some others were pleased out of their undeserved respect to nominate me as Moderator of the Assembly for that session, which was consented unto. Whilst I was in the Synod the intenseness of my mind about the work before me, made me to forgett my illness. But at night I could not sleep, nor eat in the day Time. I laboured to dispatch the business in hand with all possible speed. And in 2 dayes all was comfortably concluded, and the dissolution of the synod pronounced. I was no sooner gott home, but I grew very ill. But before I betooke my selfe to my bed I made a shift to write that preface which is now printed with the confession of Faith.¹³ My illness proved a dangerous feavor. And after I was recoverd of it, an Ague, and a sore cough (thought to be a consumption cough for

¹³ *A Confession of Faith* (Boston, 1680). Mather's preface is four pages long.

I did often spit blood) brought me very low, that many concluded I should never enjoy Health any more. But God stirred up the Hearts of his people to be much in prayer for me. This church shewed so much love to me, as to set apart 3 dayes to seeke unto the Lord by Fasting and prayer that my life might be further continued, and my Health restored. And God heard them. I remember when I was sick of my feavor, several of my friends asked me [whether?] I did my selfe think, I should then dye. To whom I could then Reply, That I was not at all carefull in that matter. It was a comfort to me to think that I had endeavored to walk before God with a perfect Heart, and to do that which is pleasing in his sight. Nevertheless, (I told them) I thought I should not dy at that tyme, for I had a great desire to suffer for the Name of Jesus Christ.

In the year 1681 My intimate dear friend Mr Oakes, the godly learned president of Harvard Colledge, dyed. The overseers of the Colledge desired me to manage the Commencement weeke, which (though the warning was very short) to gratify their Importunity, I complied with. After which, both the Fellows and overseers chose me to be president in Mr Oakes room. But the church to which I am related not consenting to that motion, for such reasons as are expressed in their return to the Committee of the overseers, I declined that overture. Only managed the Commencement the next year again.

In the year 1682 one belonging to this congregation having murderd Himselfe, I was apprehensive that Satan would take that advantage to put others upon doing the like; I therefore purposed to preach a Sermon dè the evill of selfe murder. But having a great respect for the person that had killed Himselfe, I layed aside those thoughts for some dayes. But at last was marvellously inclined to speak on that subject. Dè which I have noted in my diary,

“July. 18. 1682. This day my former thoughts about preaching of the evill of selfe murder returned upon me again. I looked up to God, and as I lifted up my heart to him when walking in my

garden, I was most strangely moved and melted. I could not speake a word for some time. Tears gushed into my eyes, and it seemed as if it were said to me, preach on that subject, and you shall save both bodies and souls from death. The lion is among thi flock, resist him with the sword of the spirit, and the sheep committed to thi charge shall be rescued out of his bloody Jawes. What the meaning of this is I know not, but wonder. And something of God is therein more than I am aware of."

Thus did I then write. The next Lords day I preached a sermon on Act. 16-27, 28. Some time after which, one (since Joyned to the church) told me, that she was at that time about to murder her selfe, only that sermon prevented her. Perhaps there might be many more such whom I have not heard of, but shall hear of it at the great day.

In May 1683, I promoted a design for a private philosophical society in Boston, which I hope may have layed the foundation for that which will be for future edification.

In the latter end of this year, that came to pass, which occasioned no small Trouble and Temptation to me. For there arrived a vessel which brought the Kings declaration, wherein hee signifieth to the Countrey that except they would make a full submission and entire Resignation to his pleasure, a Quo warranto should be prosecuted against their Charter. Some desired me to deliver my apprehensions on the Question whether the countrey could without sin against God make such a Resignation as was proposed to them. Several papers were brought to me some that came out of England or Holland others written in New England which argued for the Negative. I put those arguments into Form, and added some more of my owne, and then communicated them to some of the Magistrates, who so well approved of them as to disperse copyes thereof, that they came into many hands, and were a meanes to keep the Countrey from complying with that proposal.¹⁴ The other party conjectured me to be the author of that M.ss. and were not a little displeas'd there-

¹⁴Mather's manuscript pamphlet may be "Arguments against relinquishing the Charter," printed in the "Hutchinson Papers," in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, 3rd Ser., I (1825), 74-81.

at. Nevertheless, I believe it was a good worke, and I hope acceptable to the Lord.

Also on January. 23. The freemen of Boston mett to consider what they should do. The deputies of Boston and several others requested me to be present and to give my thoughts as to the case of conscience before them. In the Townhouse I made a short speech to the Freemen in these words, "As the Question is now stated, (viz. whether you will make a full submission and entire Resignation of your Charter and priviledges of it, to his Majesties pleasure) wee shall sin against God if wee vote an Affirmative to it. The scripture teacheth us otherwise. Wee know that Jephthah said, That which the Lord our God has given us, shall not we possess! And Naboth, tho he ran a great hazard by the refusal, yet said, God forbid that I should give away the Inheritance of my Fathers. Now would it be wisdome for us to comply. Wee know that David made a wise choice, when He chose to fall into the hands of God rather than into the hands of men. If wee make a full submission and entire Resignation to pleasure, we fall into the hands of men immediately. But if wee do it not, we keep ourselves still in the hands of God, and Trust ourselves with his providence and who knoweth what God may do for us? Moreover, there are examples before our eyes, the consideration whereof should be of weight with us. Our brethren hard by, what have they gained by their readiness to submit and comply, who if they had abode by their liberties longer would not have bin miserable so soon. And wee hear from London, that when it came to they would not make a full submission and entire Resignation to pleasure, lest haply their posterity should curse them. And shall we do it then? I hope there is not one Freeman in Boston that will dare to be guilty of so great a sin. However, I have discharged my conscience in thus delivering my selfe to you."

Upon this speech many of the Freemen wept, and they said generally, we thank you Sir for this instruction and encouragement. The Question being put to vote was carried in the Negative Nemine Contradicente. This Act of Boston had a great Influence on the Countrey, many other Towns following this example.

In June 1684. I was a 3d time visited with a dangerous Feavor which brought me to the gates of death. But the Lords people by their prayers brought me back again once more. I was no sooner raised from my sick bed, but a vessel from London brought letters which did inform of ill designs against me at Whitehall. For by meanes of the malice and perfideousness of the Randolphs¹⁵ and William Wharton, some letters of mine sent to Amsterdam were carried to Westminster. In which letters I expressed my sentiments dè the evill of the Times in respect of persecution, and profaneness which did abound, and that it seemed as if now were the slaughter of the witnesses spoken of Rev. 11. And altho I said not one word of the King yet it was very easy for ill-minded men to wrest my words, and put their owne construction on them; so that my danger was very great. Moreover, the wicked persons mentioned forged a letter (a large one 3 sides in folio) which was full of Treasonable expressions, pretended to be written at Boston 10m. 3. 1683. and they subscribed my Name to it. Yet not so much as one line of it was ever written by me. Howbeit, that letter was read before the King and his Council. This affliction proved a mercy to me. For it caused much prayer to be made for me, not only by my owne flock here in Boston, but up and down in the Countrey. It also put me upon renewing my Covenants with God. I have thus recorded. July. 16. 1684.

“I find in the scripture that when the Servants of God have bin distressed, they have made vows to the Lord. I being in some distress because I hear that some letters which I sent to Holland are fallen into the hands of some at Whitehall, do humbly vow to the Lord,

“If God will save me from the evill designed against me, and if hee will be so gracious as to send tidings from London that hee has deliverd me from the malice of those that have sought my soul, Then God shall be my God, and I will (Christ helping me) endeavor to do more for his glory than ever yet I have done.

“My Lord and my God! When did any servant of thine, vow to thee in sincerity, but you hadst respect to him? And shall I be

¹⁵ Edward Randolph was customs collector and sole official agent of the English crown in New England. He was for a short time assisted by his brother Giles.

the first whom you wilt not regard? I am thine save me! Amen! O my Lord and my God! Amen! Amen! My God has saved me.”

Thus did I then write. That which troubled me was, that I was like to suffer as an evill doer through the malice and falsehood of wicked men. Might I have suffered for any Truth which I had been witness to, I could have rejoyced in it. But now God was not like to have glory by my sufferings, which was a very sad thought. But the Lord overruled things so, as no hurt came to me. Only I was made a reproach in the world. For Lestrangle, in his Observator, Nov. 26, 27. and Dec. 1. 1684, has published some part of that forged Letter and so takes occasion to abuse me according to his wonted maner. Also, Sr Richard Dutton brought a copy of that pretended letter to Barbados and dispersed it, in the West Indies, that so Hee might expose me to obloquy and reproach in those parts of the world. I could now read the Booke of psalmes with particular application and more feelingly than ever in my life before. I could now say, princes have sat and spoken against me. I am filled with the contempt of them that are at ease. The proud have had me greatly in derision. They have forged a ly against me. They have digged pits for me. The wicked have wayted for me to destroy me. Deliver me not to the will of mine enemies; False witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breath out cruelty. And innumerable other passages in the Psalmes could I then read and pray over so as never before nor since.

The consideration of my late sickness put me upon exciting the church to looke after another Teaching officer, lest they should be left as sheep without a shepherd. Whereupon they did unanimously elect (and since ordain) my son Cotton as their pastor. I was very backward in consenting to their desires, because of my Relation to him. But considering the church could not agree in calling any other, I gave way to their Importunity. And in this thing not only their great love to me was manifested, but I saw in it a marvellous Answer to many prayers.

Being solicitous in my thoughts both as to my owne affairs, and also dè the distressed estate which the countrey was in by reason of the Quo warranto against the charter, I did set my selfe by secret prayer with Fasting, to begg mercy and Salvation for New England and for my selfe in particular.

Aug. 29. 1684.

Never more cause of deep Humiliation before the Lord, than now. The Remembrance of my old sins should humble me. And abiding iniquities. pride, passion, selfishness, sensuality, unbeleef, inordinate love to creatures etc. My deficiency as to spirituall gifts; my great unfruitfullness.

Of late I have bin sick and near to death. I no sooner began to recover, but found Troubles and Tumults amongst the Brethren in the church. And now I am told that a letter of mine sent to Amsterdam is carried to Whitehall, and the Toreys say it is Treason, and that I shall be sent for to London, so that my estate and life is struck at.

No minister in New England is so circumstanced as I am, for which no reason can be given, but the greatness of my sins above any ones in the Land.

I likewise hear that the great ones in England are offended at what I spoke to the Freemen in Boston. In England things are sad. As for New England the charter is condemned by a *Scire facias*.

In my family debts and straits oppress me.

Humble requests unto God in Jesus Christ

1. That more of his Holy spirit may be poured on me.
2. His presence with me in private Meditations and publick ministrations.
3. Guidance as to what subjects to handle in my publick ministry; and let there be a blessing on what is now in the press.
4. That God would sanctify all his dispensations towards me.
5. That hee would hear prayer on my behalfe so as to save me from evils threatned by enemies, and feared by my friends.
6. Be mindfull of his people every where, especially in New England.

7. Guide as to the settlement of this Church, and my sons ordination.

8. Be gracious to my Family. providing for me therein. continuing Health to me and mine.

Put his fear into the Hearts of all my children, that they may be all taught of God.

Amen! and Amen!

Concerning this day thus spent, I have thus sett down in my diary,

“As I was pleading with God for New England that Hee would not cause the Hope of his servants dè his salvation to be a hope which maketh ashamed, I was exceedingly melted before the Lord, and afterwards much revived in my spirit, beleeving that God had heard me.”

Several times after this, I sett my selfe to seeke the Face of God, after the same maner and for the same causes. Particularly on the 6th of Feb. 1684/5.

Grounds for deep Humiliation before the Lord.

My old sins.

Remaining iniquities.

Deficiency as to spirituall gifts and attainments. Others think I am something, but how are they mistaken. I am nothing. Alas for my great unfruitfullness.

Things are said in England.

Wofull dayes like to come on New England.

Lately my brother Timothy dyed by a sudden and Terrible stroke of God, not speaking a word after his Fall.

Humble Requests to God in Jesus Christ.

1. That I may be more to his glory than ever yet I have bin.
2. That more of the spirit of the Lord Jesus may be poured on me.
3. That I may be assisted in that worke of writing dè Christ.
4. Guidance as to my sons ordination both as to time and thing.
5. Remember his people in England.
6. Save New England.

7. Remember my poor sinfull Family in all respects.
Amen! O Lord, Amen!

Concerning this, I have thus Recorded in my diary. Feb. 6. 1684. "This day spent in my study, in prayer and Meditation, with Fasting. As I was praying that God would deliver New England I was much moved and melted before the Lord, not being able to speake for some time. But then I could not but say, *God will deliver New England! God will deliver New England! God will deliver New England.* So did I rise from my knees with much comfort and assurance that God had heard me. Those things I think were from the spirit of God. Before I prayed, I was very sad and dejected in my spirit; but after I had prayed, I was very joyfull and cheerfull. I will then wayt for Gods salvation."

This very day King Charles II dyed, by whose death Kirk's coming as Governor to New England was prevented, and New England was that day delivered.

The Lord did not make me wait long for the tidings of this Salvation, for on April 14 A vessel from England brought the tidings of that Kings death, whose life if it had bin prolonged a few weekes longer, would have bin the ruin of New England. Bloody Kirk would in a few weekes have made horrible slaughters.

March 19. 1684/5. The overseers of the Colledge did unanimously devolve the care of the Colledge upon me, desiring that I would Act as *Praeses pro Tempore*, till such Time as a settlement could be procured. I did therefore visit the Colledge usually every week the last summer, and managed the Commencement a 3d Time; and endeavord the Reformation of those excesses and abuses which were wont to be of later years on the Commencement day and weeke, and therefore did my selfe stay that weeke at the Colledge, that so I might prevent disorder and profaneness.

After the vacation Time was over, I revived the disputations of the graduates, and did my selfe moderate in the Colledge Hall once a Fortnight untill the extremity of the winter came on.

Thus have I related the story of my owne life for more than 46 years, so farr as I am able to recollect, and think convenient to

express. And I have done it for my children, that so they might sett their hope in God, (the God of their Father, and the God of their grand Fathers) and keep his Commandments. If they seeke him diligently, and depend on Jesus Christ, that God who has carried their Father through all his Temptations, will do the like for them. And let them know for their encouragement, that God has sometimes (I may say many times) enabled their Father not only to pray but to believe for them, so many a Time in secret prayer, and at the Lords Table when I have administred before him. Dè my son *Cotton*, I have before expressed how the Lord enabled me to beleeve for him, and might have said much more regarding that particular Faith which I had for him. I remember that many years ago I wrote to his uncle in Ireland, that if ever Father had a particular Faith for a child, then I had so for that child, of whom I could with Assurance say, God has blessed him, yea, and Hee shall be blessed. As to my son Nathaniel, I remember that when he was baptised there was a perswasion wrought in my heart (which I think was from God) that the Lord would make him an instrument of glory to his Name. And at another Time, when hee was dangerously sick of a Fevor praying with him in my Family, God stirred up Faith in my Heart for him. And several times in secret prayer, some of which are noted in my diaryes. Anno 1670. pag. 89, 90. Diary Anno. 1674. p. 158. Anno 1675. p. 5, 6, 7, and 68.

Dè my son Samuel, in my papers of observations, I have thus recorded. June. 22. 1676. My samuel being dangerously sick I earnestly prayed for him, and God enable me to beleeve that the child should live to be an instrument of doeing Service and bringing glory to the Name of God. I pleaded former arguments with God to spare him. I also again renewed my promise to endeavor to bring him up for a special Service of God, And I promised the Lord that if he would have compassion on the child, I would record his goodness, that the child when he shall be of years of discretion might see it, and know what God had done for him, and what ingagement Hee is under, to love, serve, and live to God in Jesus Christ. And that he might see how his Father has prayed

and Trusted in the Lord for him. After I had prayed, as I was in my garden, and had this *soliloqui*, "God has heard my prayer for this child, God will answer me, and the child Shall live to do service for the lord his God, and the God of his Father." My heart was melted before the Lord, which meltings I think were the worke of his Holy spirit. And therefore I am not altogether without hope, that this child shall be blessed and made a blessing in his generation. Amen! O God, in Christ Jesus, Amen!

In the year 1679, it came into my heart that I should set apart some time by Fasting and prayer to seeke unto God for that child in special, which I did 3 dayes in 3 several moneths. And I find that I have thus recorded in my diary.

May 14. 1679. This day spent in prayer and Meditation, with Fasting, meltings of Heart and many Tears before the Lord, in special in crying to heaven for my *Samuel*, that converting grace might be bestowed on him. I think God sayd to me by his Holy Spirit, According to thi faith be it done unto thee; and I was perswaded that God would bless and give grace to that child. Amen! dear Lord Jesus. Amen!

I have also thus recorded. Aug. 9. 1679. This day spent in prayer with Fasting in my study. A special thing which I prayed for, was, that the Lord would pour his spirit on my *Samuel*. This is the third Time that I have Fasted and prayed for that child. And I am perswaded that Hee shall be blessed. God has heard me.

Dè my daughter *Mariah*, I find that in my Observations I have thus Recorded. January. 7. 1676. This evening I called my *Mariah* into my study, exhorting and charging her to fear and serve God, and labor after an Interest in Jesus Christ. After she was gone, I earnestly prayed to God for her, saying, Lord, I can not give thee rest except you convert this child. O circumcise her heart to love thi Name. Thou hast promised it, and I trust it shall be so. Thus did the Lord enable me to beleeve for her, and to cast her upon Christ.

As for Bettee and Sarah, the Lord has enable me to pray and hope for them also, the particulars whereof I shall not here relate. I can truly say (through grace) I have not one child whom I have

not by Name prayed for every day and night since they came into the world, except when I have bin sick and unable to pray at all. I then commend them all to God, And let them know assuredly that if they do not repent of sin, beleve on Christ, and fear and serve God, their Fathers prayers will aggravate their eternal misery in another world, which mercy forbid!

It has bin my maner constantly to set a day apart in my study, before I administred at the Lords Table. And I would not for all this worlds good, be without the Answer of those prayers. I have often mett with Christ at his Table. Some of the meltings of my soul before him upon such occasions I noted down in my diary, as soon as I returned into my study. It may be it will be for the spirituall edification of my children that I should here transcribe some of those experiences. I shall therefore insert these which follow,

March. 30. 1673. I was this day much affected in administring the Lords supper, especially in the last prayer, saying, Now dearest Lord, If ever there were poor creatures in this world, that had cause to love and bless the Lord, we are they. Wee have done thee Infinite wrong, but you hast forgiven us all those wrongs, and dealest with us as with thi friends this day. How can wee but mourn for the wrong wee have done thee? If wee had wronged though an enemy, and that in a small matter, wee should grieve for it. But wee have wronged the son of God our Savior; yea wee have killed him. Hee had never come to the cross, had it not bin for our sins as wee are the elect of God. But this blood which wee have shed has procured our pardon, as it did for the Jewes that killed him, so many of them as belonged to election. Also Christ prayed for them, saying, Father forgive them, And so you knowest hee has done for us. Christ has sayd before thee dè us, Father, forgive them. If children offend their Father much, yet if any of them come and say, I am sorry for what I have done, I'll do so no more, Father be reconciled to me, will not a Father then forgive them? O! our Father, wee have sinned against thee, but wee are sorry for it, and would do iniquity no more; Father forgive us. You knowest our Hearts, you knowest that wee could be

glad if wee might never have so much as one sinfull thought in our hearts, nor speake so much as one unprofitable word more whilest wee live.

And there is another thing which wee would beg of thee, if ever you wilt hear the cries of poor creatures, deny us not that request, It is O Lord, that you wouldst sanctify us by thy spirit.

March. 1. 1673/4. I was this day much affected at the Lords Table saying in prayer, lord, wee shall never perish. They that beleve on Christ shall never perish; And you knowest that we beleve on him. You hast brought us to the blood of sprinkling, and therefore you wilt bring us to Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and wee shall behold his glory. Wee shall see our Joseph, our Jesus in all his glory. Wee shall behold King Solomon in all his glory. Yea, Solomon in all his glory was not arayed as Christ is; wee shall see that glory, and shall sit with him on thrones of glory.

August. 23. 1674. Graciously affected in the Lords work this day. Some quickenings at the Lords supper, especially in the last prayer, saying, O Heavenly Father and our God in Jesus Christ, wee have avouched thee to be our God, and now wee know that you hast avouched us to be thi people, because you hast given us thi son, and you wilt with him give us all things. Father, wee humbly expect from thee, that according to thi Covenant, even the new Covenant, you wilt forgive us our iniquities. Such is the grace of thi Covenant as that you wilt not impute our infirmities to us, if they be our burden, and you knowest that they are so. Wee put the Answer of our prayers upon that, and are willing to be denyed if it be not so. But you that searchest hearts, knowest that you hast created such a spirit within us. Wee are willing to be delivered from all sin, and wee are willing to yeild Holy perfect obedience to all thi commands, tho' how to perform wee find not. Father Father, deal with us as with thi children!

Sept. 9. 1677. Quickned at the Lords Table, especially in praying that God would remember his Covenant with children, saying before the Lord, Lord! our Fathers and mothers (as for many of us wee may say it) are now in glory, and you wilt bring

us to be with them, and also our children after us, so as that they, and wee, and our children shall together sound forth thi prayes to eternity. In speaking thus, Tears gushed from me before the Lord. I trust prayer and Faith shall not be in vain. Oh! I have prevailed and obtained mercy for my poor children. Amen! Lord Jesus!

These are some (and but some) of the experiences which I could mention. There are more in my diaries, and many which I have not written down. Nor am I willing that these should be known till after my death.

By the things which have bin related, it is manifest, that the Lord has had respect to my wishes written down before him January 11. 1670. For 1. Hee has put into my hands peculiar opportunities and advantages for Service to his Name. Sometimes in the pulpit, especially when I have preached to the Generall Court, Also in respect of the press, not only in New England but at London, and in Holland. By meanes whereof I hope I shall leave those things behind me, that will do some good in the world, after I shall be gone out of it. And in respect of the Colledge. 2. Hee has restored and continued my Health and life and enabled me to finish all those things which were in my Heart to do for him about 15 years ago, and other things besides. 3. Hee has so farr gratified my desires of suffering for him, as that my Name has bin cast forth as vile, and wicked men in England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Barbados, Nevis etc—have bin speaking all maner of evill of me falsely. And I would faine hope that the ground of these my sufferings has bin, because I have desired to approve my selfe faithfull to the Lord Jesus and to his Kingdome and Interest.

But when I consider all, I am greatly confounded, and ashamed to think how little I have done for God and for Jesus Christ, and how short I have fallen of the obligations the Lord has brought me under, that I should glorify his Name. Hee may now justly put an end to my dayes, and take me out of the world because I am (and ever have bin) an unprofitable servant. Were it not for the Righteousness of Christ, I should despair forever. In him looke upon me and save me, O Lord my God.

(December. 24. 1685) Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

I have preached in Boston above 24 years. In which Time, the Lord has enabled me to preach over the whole body of divinity. It was 18 years from my beginning to my finishing that worke. Likewise, I have (after my weake maner) opened and applyed the 8 Beatitudes (as they are called) The parable dè the wise and Foolish Builder, The parable of the sower, The parable of the Tares. The 2d chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, The 2 chapter of the Revel. and the 3d to verse 12. The 10 Commandments, and the Lords prayer (as it is commonly called) Besides many other Scriptures.

Eph. 6. from vers. 9 ad 19 inclusive.

Rom. 8 ad vers. 36.

In the latter end of the year 1685, a wicked man sett up a dancing school in Boston, who taught promiscuous dances; and many in Boston; yea, some church members did encourage him. This caused me to write that little discourse against profane and promiscuous dancing, then printed;¹⁶ which had some good effect in convincing several of the evill of such a practice.

In the year 1686, the state of the Colledge was altered with the Civil Government; The Rectorship whereof was then devolved upon me.

This year, I looked upon it as my duty to withstand the superstitious and profane practices which now began to prevayl in New England. And therefore wrote something dè the unlawfullness of the Common prayer Worship, and of Kissing the Booke in swearing¹⁷—Also, Against Health drinking, unlawfull Games, Christmas Keeping, Shrove Tuesday, and the like vanities¹⁸—

Febr. 27. 1686. After I came from preaching this Lords day, as I was praying alone in my study for good tidings out of Eng-

¹⁶ *An Arrow against Profane and Promiscuous Dancing* (Boston, 1684 [i.e., 1685]).

¹⁷ *A Brief Discourse Concerning the Unlawfulness of the Common-Prayer Worship* [Cambridge, 1686]. For this important book see Thomas J. Holmes, *Increase Mather, A Biography*, I, 46-63.

¹⁸ *A Testimony Against Several Profane and Superstitious Customs* (London, 1687).

land, I was much melted before the Lord. Again, on March 11. I sought unto God in secret with tears that hee would send reviving Newes out of England. I could not but beleve that it would be so. All this spring in my Family but especially closet prayers, I was still inclined to make the same Request. And behold! on May 19 a vessel arrived from London with the Kings declaration for liberty to Non-Conformists.

This year (1687) contrary to all expectation the Commencement work was the 5th Time cast upon me.

I am now wayting and praying for an earthquake, which shall issue in the downfall of the Lords enemies and the exaltation of Christs Kingdome and Interest.

Considering that it might prove Advantageous to the Countrey, if an Address of Thankes to the King for his declaration of Indulgence, should be sent from New England I proposed that matter to the ministers in Boston (in Sept. 1687) who consented, and accordingly it was left to me to direct it unto some Gentlemen in London, who presented it, and wrote me, that it came very seasonably, administring an happy opportunity to take off some misrepresentations of the Countrey, which they that bear us no good will had lately abused this poor people with.

In October, I moved that our churches (and not the ministers only) might Thank the King for his declaration, which was readily complied with by 10 churches. It was by sundry good and wise men judged expedient that some one should go to London with this Address, who might there obtain an Interest in such NonConformists as have the Kings ear; and in special take care for the well settlement of the Colledge. Several advised me to go. Some of my owne flock who I thought would never have consented to any such thing, did (to my amazement) signify their willingness that I should ingage in such a service. Hereupon, I sett my selfe with Fasting and prayer, to seeke the Lord about it. On dec. 10. 1687. I spent the day alone with God in my study, and prayed to him, that if Hee would not have me to go for England that then the brethren of the church might not consent, but that if God would have me to go, that then Hee

would incline the Hearts of the Brethren accordingly, so should I know his mind. The next day, I mentioned the thing to the church, saying to them, that I knew not how to discern the mind of God, but by them. And that if they sayd to me Stay I would stay, but if they sayd to me Go, I would cast my selfe on the providence of God and go in his Name. They unanimously consented.

My purpose for England was no sooner noysed abroad, but Randolph (the Adversary of this Judah) caused an officer to Arrest me (on a Satturday dec. 24) for a pretended defamation. This caused much prayer (both in Boston and elsewhere) to be made for me continually: And God was pleased graciously to Answer. For when the Court sat (January. 31.) the overruling providence of God so ordered that there were but two Common prayer-men of the Jury (whereas it was thought all the Jury would have bin picked of such, only to do me an ill turn) and the whole Jury cleared me, and Randolph was ordered to pay Costs of Court, instead of obtaining 500 li of me, which hee hoped for. Thus has God bin my Helper!

March. 13. This day I was strangely melted in my spirit and perswaded that God would be with me in my going for England and that I should there do some service for him and for his people.

March. 27. 1688. Randolph sent an officer to arrest me again: but providence had so ordered that I had taken physick that morning, and thereby escaped the snare that was layd for me, and [. . .] untill I was informed of the evill designs against me.

March. 28. This day the ministers in Boston Fasted and prayed with me on occasion of my intended voyage for England. In the morning as I was alone in my study praying, I was exceedingly melted before the Lord, and could not but say, God will give me to find things in England in such a state as that I shall have an opportunity to do service for his people in New England. I now know it will be so; for thou O Lord God hast told me that it will be so! This I found to be so, at my first arrival in England and all the Time of my being there.

I will trust in the Lord forever. Hee is the rock of ages, and the rock of my salvation!

Observables dè my voyage to England
in the year 1688.

1. The enemies of the good people in New England (who were in a peculiar maner my enemies) failed in their designs of preventing my purpose for England. I went to Sr Edmund Andros (who was then the governor and oppressor of New England) and acquainted him with my designs for london. I did also give notice of it to the whole Countrey in a lecture sermon on Exod. 33.15. Whereupon Edward Randolph being assisted by Benjamin Bullivant the Apothecary who was then a Justice of peace, (men whose names will stink in New England to the worlds end) and others of that fraternity, doubting that I might make complaints to the King of their irregular proceedings, especially of their contempt manifest of the Kings declaration for Indulgence to dissenters in matters relating to conscience; they caused an officer to go to my house, with a design to arrest me in an action of Scandal, on a pretended defamation of Randolph, (for which I had bin arrested once before, and the Court found for me against Randolph, and ordered him to pay cost of Court.) But it so hapned that I had taken some working physick that morning, which caused me to refuse to speake with the officer altho I knew nothing of his design. Within an hour there was a report in the Town that I was arrested and Bullivant who signed the writt was the Reporter: thereby I came to understand what their evill devices were, and kept my dores shut for several dayes, not going abroad my selfe. March. 30. 1688, many of the church came to me desiring that I would not appear in publick on the Lords day because wicked men were lying in wait to apprehend me. In the night about 10h, after I had commended my Family to God, I left my owne House: I put on a wigg, and a white cloke. Nevertheless, I understood afterwards that a man (whose name was Thurton) being one of Randolphs creatures and appointed to watch my motions and to apprehend me, when Hee saw me, and knew me by my gate, his heart failed him, and Hee professed Hee

had no power (notwithstanding his being empowered by the marshall) to lay his hands on me. That night I lodged at Capt. Philips in Charles Town, and did there keep my selfe private until April. 1. when after the sabbath was over several pious young men of my flock came to me desiring me to remove to a more private place, because Randolphs emissaries were searching for me in many places. I therefore removed about midnight to A. Wayes in Rumney Marsh. April. 3. In the night some friends with my sons Cotton and Samuel came to me, and attended me to pulling-point, where Mr. Rucks Ketch lay to assist me in my voyage. There I left my son Cotton, and tooke Samuel with me for England.

April. 4. At breake of day, wee sailed towards plymouth, waiting for the ship from Boston in which I had bespoke my passage. There wee continued several dayes and nights. April. 7. Having notice by a shallop belonging to mr David Edwards which was appointed to attend my motions, that the ship was coming from Boston, the Ketch wherein I was sailed towards the ship (called the President, Arthur Tanner master) where I was gladly received, and comfortably accomodated. Thus did God preserve me from the malice of those wicked men who were then in power in New England. And my dearest friends were active in sending me away, like those that let Paul down at a window in a basket that his enemies might not have their will on him.

2. I had a great desire (if the Lord should see it good) to see my old friends in dorsetshire. And providence so ordered it. God gave us a comfortable passage. and deliverd us from some eminent dangers. Both in respect of Islands of Ice which we were surrounded with, April 17, 18, 19. Wee came within a mile of one of them as bigg as egg rock at Lyn in New England and higher than that. It oversett in our sight having many gulls upon it. May. 10. A foggy day. About noon wee discovered rocks on the starboard side of the ship, which we were running upon. Here was a merciful preservation. Wee altered our course, and within 2 hours mett with a fishing boat. The men (who belonged to St Joseph in Cornwall) were barbarously uncivil to us,

refusing to tell us where wee were, untill I called them into the great cabin and gave them 4 halfe crowns. Then they assured me, wee were gott into the wrong channel, and were sailing towards Barnstable when wee thought wee were on the other side of the land. This was contrary to what these lying Fishermen had before declared, no doubt designing to have our ship made a wreck. Only my 10s made them to speake the Truth. Wee sailed back again round Syilly. May. 16. A Weymouth boat coming by our ship, I left the ship, and went on shore in the boat (taking my Samuel with me). This was the last Town which I was in when I left England Anno 1661. and providence so ordered it that Weymouth was the first Town that I sett my foot on shore in after 27 years absence from England. And this was according to my desire. For here my old friends were overjoyed to see me again. The next day I preached the Lecture at Melcomb Regis. After which I rode to dorchester, where my old friends Mr and mrs Dammer under whose roof I had sojourned many moneths, (almost 30 years before) did entertayn me with the greatest respect and joy Imaginable, professing that there was not a man upon earth whom they were more glad to see. I stayed a weeke at dorchester, and preached there on the Sabbath amongst some of my old acquaintance. But most of those with whom I had bin intimate were dead.

On May 25. 1688. God brought me (and my Samuel) alive and in Health to London. Here I mett with mr *Stephen Lob*, who was then often at Court.¹⁹ Hee informed the King that I was come over from New England with some Adresses to his Majesty, who appointed me to attend him the next day. May 30. I attended in the Long Gallery in Whitehall where I knew the King would come about 10h. When Hee came I offered to kneele, but the King bid me not do it. I then sayd, Sr, your Majesties most loyal subjects in New England, do with all possible veneration present this Address of Thankes to your Majesty, for your most gracious declaration of Indulgence. The King

¹⁹ Stephen Lobb was the pastor of an independent congregation in Fetter Lane, London. Because he was able to maintain his Independency in church matters and still become a familiar figure at King James' court, Lobb was nicknamed the "Jacobite Independent."

replied, read it sir, which I did, and told him it was subscribed by 20 ministers in New England in the name of their several congregations. Then I again gave it to the King who tooke it out of my hands and sayd, I am glad my subjects in New England are sensible of any ease or benefit by my declaration. And it shall continue. I hope by a Parliament to obtain a Magna Charta for liberty of conscience. I then presented the Plymouth Address, to which the King replied, I kindly accept of this Address also, and say again, as I sayd before, you shall have a Magna Charta for liberty of conscience.

3. God ordered the season of my Arrival in England so as was for the best. For King James was nearly fallen out with the Bishops. so that Hee and His ministers thought it their Interest to be kind to Nonconformists. The Roman Catholicks at Court were very courteous to me. How often did I think of that Scripture, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them. March. 16. 18. Those serpents contrary to their natures were so farr from hurting me, as that they were very kind to me. *Nevil Payn* told me that *Father Peters* would be glad to speake with me, and that Hee was willing to concern Himselfe for the obtaining of kindnesses for New England but I durst not Trust him, nor did I ever exchange 10 words with him, notwithstanding the Reports which some malicious spirits invented (and printed) dè my Intimacy with *Peters*.²⁰ Some that were friends to New England advised me to it, but my Answer to them was, that it was next going to the devill for help, and I could not find in my Heart to do it. Since I have seen that it was a gracious providence that did prevent me.

Within halfe a year after my Arrival in England, the Revolution hapned by meanes whereof I had a wonderfull opportunity put into my hands to prevent evill, and obtain good for New England as I shall hereafter declare.

4. Providence ordered my acquaintance with such persons as did exceedingly advantage me for a most successful management

²⁰ Henry Neville Payne was a Restoration playwright and court intriguer. Edward Petre was a Roman Catholic priest and James II's confessor.

of my Negotiations in behalfe of New England. In King James Time, my acquaintance with Mr Pen, Counsellor Owen, and mr Lob proved a mercy to New England they being then all of them great at Court, and willing to concern themselves for New England. To give mr Pen his due, Hee did in my hearing in the Kings closet (when no one has bin present besides the King Pen and I) advise King James to be kind to his subjects in New England. I have noted in my diary June. 18. 1688 that mr Pen sayd to me being then at Whitehall, that Hee had bin considering the New England affair. That Nicolson should be removed. That something should be sent to Andros that would nettle his nose; and that if Hee did not comply therewith Hee should be turnd out of his government. That the true reason of this was the state of affairs was now changed in England, but (sayd Hee) they in New England will think you art the only cause of it, and that will make them afraid of you. Likewise, my acquaintance with the Nonconformist ministers at London was a mercy. I used to indent with some of them, that if they would spare Time to go unto such or such a great person of their acquaintance, and improve their Interest in him for New England then I would gladly assist them in preaching. After the prince of Oranges intended discent was known, King James sent for many of the dissenting ministers both presbyterians and congregational men. They did (upon my sollicitations) pray him to be kind to their brethren the dissenters in New England. Mr Alsop²¹ told him, that some made an objection against his Majesties being real in his declaration, which He knew not Himselfe how to Answer, And that was, that whereas in his declaration Hee did promise liberty and a confirmation of property to dissenters in England, there was a whole nation of dissenters in New England who notwithstanding his declaration, had liberty and property taken from them. The King told them that Hee knew not of it, untill of late that I had informed him how it was with his subjects there and Hee would take an effectual Course to remedy what was amiss, or words to that purpose.

²¹ Vincent Alsop was a celebrated Presbyterian minister who, like Stephen Lobb, appeared frequently at James' court.

After the Revolution my intimate acquaintance with Sr Henry Ashurst proved a singular mercy to New England for Hee (being a member of parliament) concerned Himselfe to the utmost in that capacity to serve this countrey. I also became acquainted with the leading men in the convention parliament, particularly, Sr Edward Harley, Sr John Thomson, Mr Sacheveril, Alderman Love, Mr John Hampden, Sr John Somers, the three mr Foleyes, and others by meanes whereof it was, that votes in the House of Commons, and a bill for reversing the Judgment against the old charter, did pass that House.²²

Mr Griffith brought me into acquaintance with my Lord Wharton by whom I was introduced to King William, and became known unto many of the nobility, whose favor I did sollicit for New England. And so did that noble Lord upon all occasions with the King and with the Lords of the council, as if Hee had been constituted an Agent for the Countrey.

Also, my being brought into acquaintance with several of the Bishops proved advantageous to New England. Major Thompson brought me to be acquainted with Dr Burnet the Bishop of Salisbury, who told me that Hee would declare openly in the House of Lords, that there was a greater sacredness in the charter of New England than in those of the corporations in England because those were only acts of grace, whereas the charter of New England was a contract between the King and the first patentees. They promised the King to enlarge his dominions on their owne charges, provided that they and their posterity after them might enjoy such and such priviledges. They had performed their part. Now for the King to deprive their posterity of priviledges therein granted was great injustice. I remember my Lord Wharton sayd to me, that my having ingaged the Bishop of Salisbury to appear for New England was the best Jobb I had done these 7 years.

²² This was the Corporation Bill, designed primarily to restore charters to English boroughs. The bill never became law. For colonial interest in it see Leo Francis Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments respecting North America*, II (Washington, 1927), 8, n. 1.

Mr Hilton of Newington-Green (an excellent good man) being intimate with Dr Tillotson the Archbishop of Canterbury, brought me into acquaintance with him also, which proved a great mercy to New England. For Hee did upon my sollicitations oftentimes concern Himselfe for the good of this Colony, praying both the King and Queen to be kind to their subjects here. I remember Hee told me, that he had sayd to the King it would not do well for him to take away any of those priviledges from the people of New England which had bin granted to them by King Charles. I.

My being known to some Ladyes of Honor who were frequently with and had great Interest in the Queen, was likewise advantageous. The Countess of Southerland (a very pious and admirably prudent lady) did sollicit both the King and Queen with great Importunity to be kind to New England. She told me (October. 6. 1690) that the Queen sayd to her, my Lady Southerland trouble yourselfe no more about New England. They shall have what they desire; I have spoken to the King for them, and Hee has promised me that their priviledges shall be restored to them.

Moreover, the Countess of Anglesey (she was a member of Dr Owens church) my Lady Clinton (who is one of mr Alsops church) Madam Lockart all of them Ladyes of honor belonging to the Court, did through my sollicitations pray the Queens favor to her subjects in New England.

6. I had (through the gracious providence of God) singular advantages put into my hands (I wish I had had wisdom to improve them) to serve my Countrey, by reason of that access which I had unto two Kings successively, and to the present Queen, and plainly, particularly, and privately to lay before them the state of their subjects in New England and to entreat Royal favor for them. I did on the very day when I had bin admitted into the Royal presence, write down what I had spoken, and what Answers I had. Besides what is above expressed dè my Addresses to King James, I have (in my Day Booke) noted that on June. 1. 1688, being admitted into the Kings closet, I

sayd to him, Sr your Majesties most loyal Subjects in New England think they can never be sufficiently thankfull to God and to your Majesty for your gracious declaration of Indulgence. The King replyed, I am sure they that are truly conscientious are pleased with my declaration. As for those that are not satisfied with it, they are men that have little Tricks and designs of their owne. I was for liberty of conscience before I was King And I thank God that since I was King I have bin able to give ease to my subjects in matters relating to conscience. I then sayd to the King your subjects in New England are a people that were persecuted thither on the meer account of Religion: Inasmuch as your Majesty has delivered them from the fears of a future persecution, they are transported with joy and dutifull affection to your Majesty, and there are many hundreds of them who are desirous that I should assure your Majesty of it. The King then asked me, whether Sr Edmund Andros did give good satisfaction to his subjects there. I replyed, Sir, if Hee would but duely attend to your Majesties declaration, the people there would be well satisfyed. Does Hee not do it? sayd the King. I replyed again, There have bin some of your subjects fined and imprisoned, because they out of Scruple and tenderness of conscience declined swearing by the Booke. I brought an Address of Thankes to your Majesty from more than 20 congregations. I believe all the congregations in New England would have concurred in that Address, had not the ministers bin discouraged by Sr Edmond, who bid them have a care what they did, and one of the Counsil there sayd, we should not make Addresses to the King without their Leave. The ministers in Boston proposed to their congregations that they might keep a day of Thanksgiving to bless God for his goodness in making your Majesty their King. Sr Edmond sent for them, and bid them keep the day at their perill, and that if they did so, Hee would send souldiers that should guard them and their meeting Houses too, so that they durst not go on with their intended Thanksgiving. I wonder at that (sayd the King) for in other forreign plantations, the Governors themselves have sent me Thankes for my declaration. I then expressed my selfe to the

King in these words, Sir, All the confidence and hope of your subjects in New England is under God in your Majesty. They are perswaded that God in whose hand is the Heart of Kings, will incline your Royal Heart to releeve them, when once you shall understand how it is with them, being perswaded of your Justice and clemency. The King seemed pleased, and replied, No man shall be more ready to relieve them than I will. Do you therefore bring to me in writing the things that trouble you. Upon which I kneeled to his Majesty, and Hee held out his hand to me, and I kissed it, and tooke my leave for that Time.

July. 2. I was again admitted to his Majesty then in his closet at Whitehall. I presented a petition and memorial in behalfe of New England. As I kneeled down the King put forth his hand to take me up, and told me, I should not kneel, and then received the papers out of my hand, saying, I suppose those papers concern New England. That they are about the same things of which you had some discourse with me not long since: and then put them into his pocket and sayd, Hee would take care about that affair.

Only Mr Lob and Counsellor Owen were with me. Mr Lob sayd that if his Majesty would be kind to New England it would have a good Influence on dissenters in England. The King replied, I beleeve so. Mr Owen sayd, if his Majesty would cause something to be published in behalfe of the dissenters in New England that the world might see it, probably it would be of great advantage; the King replied, It should be done. I then sayd to the King that the chief care of his subjects in New England was, that his Majesty might be acquainted how it was with them, and they were confident that then they should be releevd. And that it would be an obligation beyond all expression great, if his Majesty would grant them a charter for their Colledge: That if the Church of England men would build a Colledge for themselves no one would object against it; but they thought it hard, that the Colledge built by Nonconformists, should be put into the hands of Conformists. The Kings reply was, Thats unreasonable, and it shall not be.

Sept. 26. I was again with the King in his closet. I then said to him, Sir, I account it my duty most humbly to Thank your Majesty, in that you were pleased some Time since to give assurance that you would confirm to your subjects in New England liberty and property according to your gracious declaration. The King replied, I will take the same care of New England as of England and you may be sure they shall have what I promised. I then said, I humbly pray that the matter may be expedited: And I know that if your Majesty shall be kind to New England it will have a good Influence on your affairs here. The King replied, Trouble your selfe no further, I will take care that the thing shall be done with expedition.

October. 16. I was with the King again in his closet. Hee then told me that property, liberty, and our Colledge should all be confirmed to us. This was the last Time that I had any conversation with that King.

After the prince of Orange was come to London, I lost no Time, but inasmuch as Hee came to restore charters, endeavored that New England charters might be restored as well as those in England. I did accordingly draw up a petition and signed it, My Lord Wharton went with me to the prince of Orange then at St. Jamess, and presented that petition to his Highness. January 9. My Lord preferred the petition with great zeale and affection. Hee told the prince that if Hee knew Hee should dy the next day, Hee would do that service for New England and that they were a conscientious godly people, and that there were proportionally more good men in New England than in any part of the world considering how small their numbers were And that they did not petition for money or souldiers etc—but for their auncient priviledges. The prince Replied that Hee would take care about it; and would give order dè it to his secretary Mr Jephson. My Lord went with me to Mr Jephsons chamber, and said to him, *Cousin* (for Hee was my Lords Kinsman) *observe the gentleman, and whenever Hee comes to you, receive him as if I came my selfe.* Soon after this there was by the instigation of some old Courtiers and Jacobites, a circular Letter drawn up

to be sent to all the plantations confirming all their old Governors till further order. The princes secretary Mr Jephson, shewed me the Letter. I told him it would undo New England if sent thither, whereupon Hee went to the prince and informed him what I had sayed, who thereupon orderd the Letter to be sent to the other plantations, and that it should not be sent to New England which was an happy Turn for that Countrey. This (if there had bin nothing else) was worth my voyage for England.

March. 14. 1688/9. My Lord Wharton introduced me to the King unto whom I sayd, I congratulate your Majesties happy accession to the Crown, and I implore your Royal favor to New England. The King replyed, you may rest assured that I will shew them all the kindness which is in my power to do. I then sayd, I may speake it humbly to your Majesty, The prayers of New England will stand you in more stead than an army of 40000 men, such a good and praying people are they. The King sayd, I believe they are a good people, but I doubt there have bin irregularities in government there. I sayd, that I durst ingage that they should be willing to reform any errors. My Lord Wharton, sayd, and I'le be their Guarrantee, and here is Mr Mather the Rector of the Colledge there, shall be the other; wee two will stand bound for New England that for the future they shall act regularly. The King sayd that Hee would forthwith give order that Sr Edmund Andros should be removed from his Government in New England and that Hee should be called to an account and that the former magistrates should proclaim the present King and Queen. I replyed, that they would do it with the Joyfullest Hearts in the world.

July. 4. 1689. At Hampton Court, my Lord Wharton introduced me to the King. I sayd to him, I presume your Majesty has bin informed of the great service which your subjects in New England have done for your Majesty and for this nation, and for the Protestant Interest in securing that Territory for King William. The King replyed that Hee had seen some letters which did speake of it; and that Hee did kindly accept of what they had done. I replyed, That if his Majesty would please to

command that his kind acceptance of what they had done should be signified to them, it would be a great encouragement. The King then sayd, that Hee would give order to the secretary of state, to write a Letter to them, to let them understand that what they had done was acceptable to him. I then sayd, Hee might by the Assistance of New England become Emperor of America when Hee pleased. And that I durst ingage for his subjects in New England that they would most readily venture their lives and estates in his service. And that all which was humbly desired in their behalfe, was, only that they might enjoy their auncient rights and priviledges. To which the King returned Answer. I do assure you I will do all that is in my power to do, that it may be so. Mr Mead being with me, sayd to the King that Hee could not do any thing more gratefull to his dissenting subjects in England than to be kind to New England in restoring to them their former priviledges. The King bad us rest satisfied that it should be done.

April. 9. 1691. Madame Lockart this morning about 9h introduced me to the Queen, and then left me alone that so I might the more freely represent before her Majesty the case of New England. The discourse was as followeth. Mather sayd, I humbly pray your Majesties favor to your good subjects in New England. There are none in your Interest more than they are; nor any that do with greater devotion pray for your long and happy Reign. They have bin exposed to great Troubles on account of their loyalty to your Majesty. For the French at Canada who have invaded them, and destroyed some of their plantations, give that as the Reason, because the people there have declared for King William and Queen Mary. They now only pray, that they may be resettled in the enjoyment of those priviledges, which they were possessed of untill the last year of King Charles II. Queen. That matter has bin a long Time before the Council. I would have that which is just done for them, and not only so but that something of favor should be shewed to them. Mather. I most humbly thank your Majesty, for the kind words which your Majesty was pleased to speake to

my Lady Southerland with respect unto New England. Queen. Mr Mather I have had a great character of you from my Lady Southerland. I have spoken to the King for New England. Hee told me that matter was before the Council. Mather. It has bin referred unto the two Chief Justices with the Attorney and the Sollicitor general. Wee only pray that the particulars approved of by them may be confirmed to us. Queen. Thats Reasonable, and I doubt not but that it will be done for you. Mather. I humbly begg your Majesty will please to speake a kind word for New England to the King upon his Return. You will thereby bring the blessing of the prayers of a good people on your Royal Person and Government. Queen. I shall be willing to do what I can for them. Mather. I have reason to beleeve that your good subjects there have bin misrepresented to your Majesty as if they were not well affected to Monarchy, but by such representations they have much wrong done to them. Some that bear them ill will have printed such Reflections on them. Queen. I have not heard that of them nor seen all the pamphlets that have bin printed dè them. Mather. Sr William Phips has with many of your Majesties subjects in New England endeavord to inlarge your Majesties dominions, and they are willing again to expose themselves in your Majesties service. Queen. Are they able to do it? I hear they are in a bad condition. Mather. They are in a very deplorable condition, but one reason of it is, because the Government there remains unsettled. Queen. That I beleeve, it must needs be so. Mather. If by your Majesties favor they shall be restored to their former priviledges they will revive, and be able to serve your Majesties Interest. Queen. I doubt there have bin differences there as well as here about church government. Mather. In New England they are generally those that are called NonConformists, but they carry it with all due respect to others. We judge some of them to be better men than ourselves. This Nation has cause to blesse God for the King and for your Majesty in respect of that act of Indulgence and the liberty of conscience which through your Majesties favor wee enjoy. Queen. That I am for. It is not in the power of men to beleeve

that they please, and therefore I think they should not be forced in matters of Religion, contrary to their perswasion and consciences. I wish all good men were of one mind. However, I would have them live peaceably and love one another.

The King was in Holland when I had this discourse with the Queen, (1691), but returned to London that moneth. I was very desirous once more to plead with the King and to begg his favor to New England. The Earle of devonshire spoke to the King praying I might have Access to his Majesty. On April. 28. I was admitted into his bedchamber. What then passed was as followeth. Mather. I most humbly thank your Majesty, in that you were graciously pleased to signify to my Lord Devonshire, That I might have leave to wayt on your Majesty in the behalfe of New England. None of your subjects are or can be more in your Interest than they are. Nor are there any that do pray more for your long life, and happy reign and the success of your Armes. King. Sr, what do you desire I should do for them? Mather. May it please your Majesty that they may be restored to their auncient priviledges, and that their settlement may be expedited. They have an humble confidence that through your Majesties goodness they shall be made happy in having their auncient priviledges restored to them, which will cause your subjects there to be your servants forever. And your Name will then be great and famous in those ends of the earth unto all posterity. Your Majesty has bin graciously pleased to referr the consideration of this affair to the two Chief Justices with the Attorney and Sollicitor general. We only pray humbly, that what they have thought reasonable for us to desire may be granted by your Majesty. King. I expect within 2 or 3 dayes to have a Report from the Committee of Lords for Plantations, and then shall see what may be done. Mather. Your Majesties subjects have bin willing to venture their lives to inlarge your dominions. That expedition against Canada was a great and a noble undertaking, and they are willing to do the like again, if encouraged by your Majesty. May it please your Majesty in your great wisdom to consider the circumstances of that people. As in your wisdom

you have considered the circumstances of England and of Scotland. In New England they differ from other plantations. They are such as are called congregational men and Presbyterians. So that such a Governor will not suit with the people of New England as may be very proper for the other English plantations.

Having thus spoken, I bowed to the King and Hee immediatly went out of his bedchamber into his closet.

Two dayes after this the Council mett at Whitehall. The King then declared that the Agents of New England should nominate a person to him to be their Governor, who might, in respect of his perswasion in matters of Religion, be sutable for them. I remember a Lord (some time after) sayd, that the reason of the Kings so expressing Himselfe, was the Impression which the words I had spoken to him but two dayes before, had made upon his spirit.

The King returned to Holland again within two dayes after this. Nevertheless before Hee went, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Mr Charleton did on my desires sollicit and pray his Majesty to be kind to New England.

October. 23. The King being newly returned to England again, the Earle of Nottingham introduced me to him, only to kiss his hand, and bid him welcome to England again. The King when Hee first saw me, smiled on me, and stepped aside to me, graciously telling me that Hee was glad to see me.

Altho I had not obtained all for New England which I desired and to my utmost endeavord to get for them, I thought it my duty to Thank, not only God, but the King for what kindness had bin shewed to that people. And I therefore proposed to the Earle of Nottingham, that Hee would please again to introduce me to his Majesty, which Hee very readily did, on Novbr. 4. the King then being in the secretary of states office, none present but my Lord Nottingham and the Earles of devon, and Portland. I then sayd, I do in the behalfe of New England most humbly thank your Majesty in that you have bin pleased by a charter to restore English liberties to them, to confirm them in their properties, and to grant them some peculiar priviledges. I doubt not

but that your subjects there will demean themselves with that dutyfull affection and loyalty to your Majesty, as that you will see cause to enlarge your Royal favors towards them. And I do most humbly thank your Majesty in that you have bin pleased to give Leave to those that are concerned for New England to nominate their Governor. Sr William Phips has bin nominated by us at the Council Board. Hee has done a good Service for the Crown by enlarging your dominions and reducing Nova Scotia to your obedience. I know that Hee will Faithfully serve your Majesty to the utmost of his capacity, and if your Majesty shall think fit to confirm him in that place, it will be a further obligation on your subjects there. The King Replyed, I shall take that Colony under my protection, and do what is in me for their encouragement, And shall take what concerns the Government there into my consideration.

After that all matters were issued which concerned the settlement of the Countrey. I was not willing to leave England without the Kings Leave. On January. 3. 1691/2. The Earle of Nottingham, did again Introduce me to the King at Whitehall after the sabbath was past, Sr William Phips being with me. After we had both kissed the Kings hand, his Majesty sayd to me, Are you going to New England? My Answer was, yes with your Majesties Leave. If in any thing I may serve your Majesty there, I shall count my selfe happy, if your Majesty will lay your commands on me. The King replyed, sr I thank you. I wish you a good voyage. I then sayd, There is one thing which I would humbly put your Majesty in mind of. Wee have in New England an Academy, a Colledge. Many an excellent protestant divine has had his education there. The King sayd, I know it. I thereupon added, If your Majesty will cast a favorable aspect on that society, it will flourish more than ever. The Kings return to me was. I shall willingly do it.

7. Whilest I was in England God favord me with great opportunities of doing service for his Name there. I preached every Lords day. very often twice the same day. Many have bin the congregations in the chief city in the Nation, where I have had

liberty to preach Christ. And there did I preach the Gospell freely for near the space of 4 years. Once a moneth I preached at Hackney for Dr Bates, with whom I used to partake at the Lords supper. Hee told his people, that if I might be detained in England Hee had rather have me joined with him in the pastoral office, than any man in the world.

I was active (according to my small capacity) in promoting the union between the presbyterians and congregational men. Dr Ansley, and Mr Vincent and some others were of the opinion that if I had not bin amongst them, that union would never have bin effected, and did therefore blesse God both for bringing me to England, and for disappointing me in my designed return to New England by causing my son Samuel to fall sick of the small pox, of which hereafter. Some ministers in the Countrey orderd solemn Thanks to be returned to me for my endeavors towards the union. The following Agreement of the united ministers of a general Assembly in devon was sent to Mr Mead, and by him delivered to me. Junii 23. 1691. Agreed, That the Rev mr John Flavell Moderator of this Assembly, send this paper unto the Rev mr Matthew Mead, mr John Howe, and mr Increase Mather, and that Hee give them, and such others as have bin eminently Instrumental in promoting this union, the Thankes of this Assembly, for the great pains they have taken therein. Isaac Gilling. Scribe.

8. My Labors for the good of New England were not (through the grace of God which was with me) altogether without fruit.

Had not providence orderd my being in England Andros, and the rest of that crew had bin reestablished in the Government, who would have revenged themselves on and murderd the best men in New England who had bin active in the Revolution there, as they did at New York. Boston would have bin made a Sham-bles.

When I left New England 6 or 7 years ago, the people there would have bin willing to have parted with halfe their estates for such a charter as that which I obtained for them, and brought over to them, which confirmes every mans property under the

great seal of England restores all English liberties, and some peculiar priviledges, Adds Nova Scotia to Boston etc—And the Government is for the present wholly and only in the hands of such as wish well to the Countrey; both as to Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and all the Council. Mercyes richly worth going to England for. Besides, all legacies granted to the Colledge and Schools of Learning are confirmed, which were in eminent danger to be lost when I undertooke my voyage with a design to endeavor the prevention of what the oppressors of New England then in that respect intended. The Government has now a legal power (with the Kings approbation) to Incorporate the Colledge, and make it an Academy, which is done. This alone was worth all my labor and prayers, if senseless ungrateful men do not bring all to ruin by their owne folly and unworthiness.

9. The disappointment which I mett with as to my Returning to New England in the year 1689, was ordered by the providence of God in very great mercy. Things were in such an hopefull way as to what concerned the happy settlement of the countrey as that I could not but sett apart several dayes to prayse and give thanks to God (in my chamber at London) because Hee had bin with me, and prospered my endeavors for the good of his New England people. And having obtained a Letter from the King (dated August. 12. 1689.) directed to those then in government, signifying his Approbation of what they had done in reassuming the Government, and encouraging them to go on, untill such Time as an orderly settlement could be obtained so as should be for his Service, and their satisfaction, and the bill for restoring charters and particularly those of N.E. having bin approved of in the House of Commons, and there being no apparent danger, but that it would be carried to perfection, I thought I might with Joy and good Tidings in my mouth return home to New England. Accordingly I bespoke my passage in W. Clark. And August 20. Tooke my leave of my friends in London, and that day went as farr as Gravesend, and the next cay came to Deal, where the ship lay. August 27. Wee went on shipboard the wind being fair. But in the night the wind turned against us. Wee continued on

shipboard 2 nights. August. 29. The wind being strong against us the passengers went on shore. and amongst others I and my Samuel.

Sept. 3. My Samuel was taken very ill. A doctor gave him a vomit, and the next day opened a vein taking from him 7 ounces of blood. The next day, his disease appeared to be the small pox. When his disease was come to the Hight, and Hee in the greatest danger, the wind came Fair, so that I must either leave him in that condition (which would in all probability have occasioned his death) or be disappointed in my hoped for Return to New England this year. My natural affection (beleeving also that it was my duty to do so,) caused me to stay. It pleased God to spare his life, and to recover him so as that October. 3. Hee was able to return in the coach with me to London. Upon my Return, my friends there comforted me with saying they were perswaded I should hereafter see that it was in singular mercy that God had detained me in England contrary to my expectation, and desires. And so afterwards it did appear. For the Whiggish Interest in England growing less, and the Toryes becoming Rampant (who a year before durst not shew their Heads) my being in England was at that time very needfull with respect to the affairs of New England.

The next spring, sr Edmund Andros etc—also 2 Agents from New England arrived at London. These Agents unhappily declined signing the Articles of Complaint against Andros and his complices, by meanes whereof those oppressors did not only come off with flying colors, but insulted over their Adversaries.²³ It was proposed that Andros might be returned governor. Mr Powle, (the honorable Speaker of the convention parliament and one of the Kings privy Council) told me there was so strong an Interest made for Andross being reestablished governor in New England that Hee was afraid they would carry it. The Earle of Monmouth assured me that the King was offended at New England because they had Imprisoned their Governor, and could prove nothing

²³ Massachusetts' agents were Elisha Cooke and Thomas Oakes. The best short account of their mission is Cooke's letter to Simon Bradstreet, October 16, 1690, in Massachusetts Historical Society, *Proceedings*, VL (1912), 644-654.

against him, That the Agents had cutt the throat of their Countrey. Also, the Earle of devon, Mr John Hampden and others whom I had caused to concern themselves for New England were extremely Scandalized, so that I was afraid all my labor had bin lost, and that all the friends whom I had brought into the Interest of New England would desert them; and so it had certainly bin, and New England ruined, if I had not bin disappointed in my Returning thither when I attempted it. New England would have bin in the same case with New York, Virginia, and the other plantations. This people would have had no better Governor and Counsellors, nor any other priviledges, than what those places have, had not the providence of God prevented my Returning to them in 1689. This I write, not conjecturally, but as that which is indubitably so.

10. During my abode in England, I experienced signal Answers of prayer. Many a day (scores of them) did I sit apart in my chamber in London, not only to pray for a blessing on my Family, and that God would in his due Time return me to them again, in all which he has bin entreated by me, but to pray that liberty, and prosperity, and a good Government might be restored to New England. The particulars are in my diaryes some of which I shall here Transcribe.

London February. 17. 1688/9. This Lords day in the morning as I was praying alone in my chamber, I was marvellously melted and could not but with Tears say, God has saved New England. The thing is done. God has done it. My God, and the God of New England has heard prayer and delivered that his people. I know that it is so. P. M. I preached for mr Alsop. As I returned (after candle light) I did (my Lord Wharton having desired me to do so) call at Whitehall. Mr Vernon (clerk to my Lord Shrewsberry the cheef secretary of state) told me that my petition for New England would be granted.

London April. 11. 1689. (Spent in prayer with Fasting in my chamber at mr Whitings Cophall Court, Throgmorton street London. I have noted in my Diary the words following.) This day God helped me to wrestle with him in prayer. The blessing

which I especially begged for, was, That I might return to New England with good Tidings. I sayed before the Lord with Tears and great meltings of soul, That I would not let him go, nor rise from my knees except Hee would grant me that blessing. And I was perswaded and did firmly believe that it would be so. I promised God that I would be his servant, and endeavor to live an holy life to his glory all my dayes; and that when Hee should bring me again to New England I would endeavor that all his people throughout that land should joyn together in offering sollemn prayes to his glorious Name for his goodness in restoring them to former mercyes and enjoyments.

November. 1. 1689. I spent the day in fasting and prayer, humbly begging that God would cause the charter bill to go forward. The very next day, the House of Lords voted that the Judges should draw up a Bill for the restoring of charters, which vote of the Lords quickned the House of Commons to go on with their bill. Thus good is it to draw near to God.

January. 18. 1689/90. Inasmuch as this day, the affair of New England was to come before the House of Lords, I prayed earnestly to God, and to Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father, entreating him to appear and to overrule all hearts, so as that no hurt might be done to his people in New England but that their liberties might be restored to them. I committed the matter to God and trusted him with it, and so was quieted and comforted in my owne spirit. The Lord did appear: for New England was not (as some would have had it) cast out of the Bill, but that bill for restoring charters was referred to a committee on Wednesday next, and the chairman of the committee a friend. Blessed be God, and blessed be Jesus Christ the son of God. Let Him who knows what I have committed to him, please yet further to appear for his names sake.

(Presently after this, that Parliament was prorogued and dissolved. The next House of Commons being disaffected to New England there was an end of all endeavors to obtain releef by the Parliament. Not one corporation was by them restored except London; The Tories (who were the prevailing party in that

House) designed that Restoration in favor of Tories and not of Whigs. Our friends advised not to bring the case of New England before them. so that now no way was left but only to gett the best we could at the Court. My sollicitations in the year 1690. and 1691. were wholly with the Court, and not with the parliament as in 1689. Of these things there is a more full and particular account in the Narrative of my Negotiation written at London November 16. 1691. and printed there.²⁴)

II. It was in Answer to many prayers that God returned me to New England again. Many in England did part from me with much affection, not expecting ever to see me again in this world. Especially in Hackney where I had preached oftener than in any one congregation: And in the Families where I had bin chiefly conversant, viz. Sr Henry Ashursts, Major Thomsons, and Mr Whitings. It may be it will not be proper for me to speake of the many Tears which those good and affectionate persons parted from me with.

I left London March. 7. 1691/2. Tooke coach about 7h A.M. for Southhampton. The next day, God brought me in safety to Southhampton. There I mett with my old acquaintance mr Robinson, but the most of my old acquaintance in that place were dead, for it was above 30 years since I had bin there. The next day Sr Wm Phips came with a yat to fetch me to Cows in the Isle of wight, where the ship lay in which I was to take my passage. I stayed there one sabbath preaching both parts of the day.

March. 15. Wee set sayle for New England. The next day the wind forced us to put into dartmouth, where wee stayed untill the sabbath was past. There I preached to dear mr Flavels congregation.

March. 22. Wee loosed Anchor from Dartmouth.

March. 27. I preached at plymouth. A.M. at the presbyterian congregation where mr Sherwill was minister, P.M., at the congregational meeting where mr Hordin was pastor. This was the last sabbath of my being in England.

²⁴ *A Brief Account Concerning Several of the Agents of New-England* (London, 1691).

March. 29. 1692. Wee sett sayle from plymouth for New England. God gave us a comfortable passage. And whereas friends were afraid lest wee should fall into the hands of French enemies, God was pleased not only graciously to preserve us from them, but to deliver a French vessel into our hands which wee met with at sea. April. 11. And at the same Time we had a wonderfull preservation. For we espied 4 ships, which supposing them to be French merchantmen our convoy attempted to get up to them, but the winds would not permit us to come nearer to them. The next day we understood by the French vessel whom we tooke as a prize, that they were 4 French men of warr returning from Martineco to France. Had we come up to them (as we would have done) they had made a prize of us. A singular mercifull providence was in this thing.

May. 14. God brought me and my Samuel with me home again to my owne House in Boston, giving me to find my wife, sons and daughters all alive and in a gracious measure of Health. Blessed be his glorious Name forever more.

I found the Countrey in a sad condition by reason of witchcrafts and possessed persons. The Judges and many of the people has espoused a notion, that the devill could not Represent Innocent persons as afflicting others. I doubt that Innocent blood was shed by mistakes of that nature. I therefore published my Cases of Conscience dè Witchcrafts etc²⁵—by which (it is sayed) many were enlightned, Juries convinced, and the shedding of more Innocent blood prevented.

The General Court by an act Incorporated the Colledge: And appointed me to be the president. God has favord me with great opportunities to do service for his Name since my return to New England. I have preached every Lords day (usually) to a great congregation in Boston, and once a fortnight at Boston in the morning and at Cambridge (where the scholars reside) in the after part of the day. I caused the masters of Art to begin disputations on Theological Questions, with a design to dispute down

²⁵ *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits* (Boston, 1693 [1692]).

Arminianisme. 3 Commencements have fallen under my Management since my Return to New England.

12. Considering the present Times, the state which England is in, and my Relations and obligations in New England I suppose I should not have had a thought about Returning to England again, but that in the latter end of the year 1693, the Governor and several of the Council, and some merchants in Boston signified to me their desires that I would take another voyage thither to serve the publick Interest of that Countrey. I have often and earnestly looked up to God about it. Some things have hapned which do astonish me. I have noted in my Diaries, what I here Transcribe.

September. 3. 1693. A.M. I preached at Boston. P.M. I preached at Cambridge. Memorandum. As I was riding to Cambridge, I prayed to God. Begged that my labors might be blessed for good to the souls of the students, at which I was much melted. Also, saying before the Lord, that some workings of his providence seemed to Intimate that I must be returned to England again, and saying, Lord, if it will be more for thi glory that I should go to England, than for me to continue here in this land, then let me go, otherwise not. I was inexpressibly melted, and that for a considerable Time; and a strange suggestion that to England I must go. In this there was something extraordinary either divine or Angelical.

October. 29. A.M. I preached at Boston. P.M. At Cambridge. As I was riding thither all the way between charlestown and Cambridge, I conversed with God by soliloquies and prayer. I was much melted with apprehensions of my being returned to England again. Strangely perswaded that it would be so. And that God was about to do some great thing there, so that I should have a greater opportunity than ever there to do service for his Name.

1693 December. 30. I spent the day with God in my study in prayer with Fasting. Meltings before the Lord this day when praying dè my being returned to England again, there to do service for his Name, and perswasions that God would appear therein.

April. 21. 1694. The day spent in Fasting and prayer. Memorandum. One special Request which this day I left before the Lord, was, that whereas I had strange Impressions on my spirit about returning to England That those inclinations might be removed out of my Heart if they were not from Heaven. It is an astonishing thing unto me, that now for above halfe a year I should be daily praying this matter. I also sayd before the Lord, that if it would be more for his glory for me to be returned to England than to continue here, and that if there I should have greater opportunities to serve him than in New England and if God and his Holy Angells will return with me thither, that then Hee will bring it to pass. As I thus spake to God, I was moved and melted wondrously and beyond expression.

As I arose from my knees, I could not but say with marvellous meltings of soul, my God has heard my prayers, and will certainly answer me. I am certain there is something divine and extraordinary in this thing. I must humbly wait the issues of divine providence and leave my selfe with God.

These passages have I recorded in my diaryes. I am the more surprised, in that the next vessels from England brought word that the Governor was ordered to return to England, and his friends wrote to him, and to the Lieutenant Governor that they should perswade me to return with him.

It likewise addeth to my astonishment, that I have ever and often found, that such meltings as these mentioned, (which no pen nor tongue is able to express) have bin attended with marvellous consequents. One more which hapned within that halfe year, I shall transcribe out of my diary. March. 13. 1693/4. This morning I begged with Tears, that I might hear from my friends and acquaintance in England something that should encourage and comfort me. Such tidings is coming, but I know not what is. I believe God has heard me. These words did I then write down in my Diary. And behold! the next ships from London, brought me Letters from a principal minister of state, and from Sr Henry Ashurst assuring me that the Laws sent over to England would pass the Royal approbation, and particularly

that Law relating to the Colledge, which was a great comfort and encouragement to me; and the more because God had made me peculiarly Instrumental in obtaining that good for New England and for the Colledge.

Letters were also sent to me from the Kings principal secretary of state the Earle of Nottingham, full of respect.

When I think of returning to England I find a great reluctancy from the consideration of the danger of the seas, the season of the year, and the thought of absence from my Family, and most of all the thoughts of leaving my son Cotton, is very grievous to me: And the Ingratitude of the people in New England (of which I have had experience) is discouraging. My opportunities in New England are great and singular. God giveth me food and raiment convenient for me. And I have respect and honor enough. I desire no more. When I search my Heart nothing will Turn the Scale with me, but this only consideration, where may I most of all glorify God, and Jesus Christ, and do service to his dear people! Here I am, let God do with me what seemeth good in his sight. (Boston N.E.) August. 28. 1694.

[Two pages, covering events in late 1694, and early 1695, are cut from top to bottom, the outer part of the leaf being gone. The remainder cannot be understood except where the original can be found in the diary (January 27, 1694/5, and March 3, 1694/5) as below:]

January. 27. 1694/5. (being the Lords [day]) This evening as I was praying in my study, a strange perswasion I had that such things would happen in England as that I should have an opportunity granted then ever to do service for the Name of Christ. I was melted before the Lord at the thoughts of it. So again as I was writing this, very wonderfully, and so as neither pen nor tongue can express. These things fill me with wonderment. From Heaven they are; and God will bring that to pass which will be to Admiration.

March. 3. (Being the Lords day) as I was this evening praying earnestly, it was marvellously suggested to me, that God would

return me to England and there accept of Service from me; that I should once before I dy, again have an opportunity there to glorify God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

July 13. I sett apart that day to seeke the face of God by fasting and prayer. In special to beg mercy for my son Samuel. I have recorded in my diary. July. 14. 1695. (which day I preached and administred the sacrament) Memorandum. In the last prayer at the Lords Table, I begged mercy (the church joining with me) for my Samuel who is dangerously sick of a feavor. God enabled me to believe that his life shall be spared, and moreover that this affliction shall be sanctified to him, and Hee fitted for service, and that the Lord will use him as an instrument of glory to his Name, and of doing good amongst his people. Amen, dearest Lord!

One of the church came to me the next day; and sayd Hee was sure my son would not dy. For (sayd Hee) God would never have given Faith to his Father for his life, if Hee had not a purpose to preserve him.

1695 July. 27. For several dayes I have been extremely dejected in spirit, fearing that all my Faith dè an opportunity and Advantage to be put into my hands to glorify God and Christ in England, was only phansy and delusion; but this morning as I was praying in my study, I had a strange perswasion, that Tidings shall come from England which will revive me. I did with tears and wonderfull meltings believe it. So did my sadness of spirit vanish.

In part fullfilled by the printing of several of my Bookes in London.

August. 4. This Lords day as I was in my study (between the publick...

[Bottom quarter of page cut away.]

In November 1695 the Question about sending an Agent for England was again brought before the general Assembly. I was Informed that their eyes were upon me for that service. Wherefore I sett apart November 30. to pray that God would in mercy order that Affair. In my diary, I have thus Recorded. Mem-

orandum. As I was this day by fasting and prayer, Importunately beseeching God to order the matter of my being again employed in an Agency for this people, in mercy, I sayd, I must Judge of the clearness of my call, by the Lords moving and inclining the spirits of men in the general Assembly. If Hee calls me to so great and hazardous an undertaking, Hee can cause them that have bin against an Agency to be for it, and that have bin against my being so improved, now to be for it: and then I shall be satisfied that his hand is in it, and that Hee does point to me to go, otherwise not; I was exceedingly melted before the Lord, and perswaded that God heard me, and would give me to see a special Answer to prayer.

december. 6. This day the Major part of the Representatives voted that they would not at this Time send any Agent, although yesterday they voted a committee to draw up reasons for sending. This sudden change in them is unaccountable. There is a signal hand of God in it, whereby my Returning to England has again bin strangely prevented, I hope in Answer to prayer. Gods Time is the best: And it is good to wait on him.

Notwithstanding these happy disappointments, I can not but think that [Christ has?] some service for me to do for his Name in . . .

[Bottom quarter of page cut away.]

March 21. Fasting in my study. In the evening prayer I was marvellously melted with perswasions that God will give me an opportunity to serve and glorify him in England.

April. 9. 1696. This morning as I was reading (in Course) Math. 8.13. it was with a strong hand impressed on my spirit, that as I had believed that god will return me to England and there give me an opportunity greater than ever to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, so it shall be done unto me. I was wonderfully melted with perswasions that so it will be. And after that again as I was praying in my study.

April. 19. Having spent the day before in prayer and meditation with Fasting, I this day administred the Lords supper. And I saw a token for good, and an assurance of further Answers of

prayer by the Lords presence with me in his work. In the morning as I was praying in my study, my Heart within me was melted with perswasions that I shall glorify Christ in England. So again as I was using soliloqui's before the Lord in my study between the Publick meetings.

April. 26. I have bin kept out of my study ever since 21 Instant, by lameness through pain in my left knee. What should be the cause of this Rebuke? Is it because I am unwilling to do service? I hope otherwise. For it is in my heart to have preached this day, not only at Boston, but at dorchester, and also to morrow at Cambridge to the Scholars. But I am (to my sorrow) rendred uncapable of preaching in any of these places at present. Is it because I have bin negligent in studyes that this evill is come upon me? Neither can that be. For I love to be no where so much as there. I am seldom less than 16 hours in 24 in my study. It may be an excess in sedentariness and hard study has bin both a naturall and a moral cause of this Affliction. Is it to Rebuke me for my being willing to Return to England there to glorify the Name of Christ? No: for I am very willing to stay where I have Riches enough, and honor enough. I desire not one grain more of those things to be bestowed on me. I can not think of going from my Relations here, without much Reluctancy. So that if I Return to England it must be purely and only to do greater service for Christ, than in New England I am capable of. The perswasions which have bin in my Heart dè that matter, I can not help. They were wrought in me when Fasting and praying before the Lord. Also, on Lords dayes, when I have bin most in the spirit. And I have left that matter wholly with God.

1696 May. 2. I was wonderfully affected this day when before the Lord with perswasions and Impressions on my spirit that Tidings will come from England that will revive me, [line crossed out.] It so fell out soon after.

[Two paragraphs crossed out.]

My soul wait thou on the Lord.

Boston, October. 1. 1696.

Anno 1697 I was afflicted with the gout in my knee.

In the year 1700 the importunity of the general Court caused me to spend 3 moneths residing in Cambridge, though absent from my Family. So again in 1701. But then I signified to the General Court, that I desired they would chuse another president. For I was not willing to live from my Family, nor to remove my Family to Cambridge whilst the Colledge was in such an unsettled state. Thereupon the Colledge was through the malice of dr Cooke and Byfield put into the hands of mr Willard as vicepresident who readily accepted of the offer without so much as once consulting with me about it.²⁶ Nor was Hee urged to reside at the Colledge. Which shewed great partiality in the Court. Thus have I bin requited by them for all the service I have endeavored to do for them, and for the Colledge. But why should I think much of it, when Moses, yea, our Lord Himselfe was ill rewarded by those whom He had layd under Infinite obligations of gratitude.

From my first being chosen president of the Colledge (1681) to my resigning my Relation to that society (1701) was full 20 years.

I was often chose president, and that with a unanimous vote. When the Colledge was put into Mr Willards hands, there was no Governor nor deputy Governor in the Countrey. There ought to have bin 14 of the Council to make a major vote. Whereas there were but 11 that voted for him, and 10 negatives and it was put to vote when Mr Foster who would not have consented was stepped out of the Council-Chamber. The night before the Representatives voted that they would not accept of him therein, but at noon when many of them had gone home, the Council sent in the vote which was of Cookes drawing up, and in an hurry they consented to it. Thus pittifully did mr Willard succeed. Hee managed the Commencement there in 1702, but so as to expose himselfe to contempt and the Colledge to disgrace.

Doubtless, there is not a government in the world that has bin layd under greater obligations by a particular man than the

²⁶ Nathaniel Byfield was a merchant; Samuel Willard was minister to Boston's Third Church. Dr. Cooke is Elisha Cooke, now more strongly than ever Mather's political opponent.

Government here has bin by me. Nevertheless, I have received more discouragement in the work of the Lord by those in Government, than by all the men in the world besides. Let not my children put too much confidence in men. It may be such as they have layd under the greatest obligations of gratitude, will prove most unkind to them. I have often had experience of it.

As for the strange perswasions I have had concerning my doing service for the Lord again in England I know not what to think of it. Such things are often from Angels. I sometimes think that Angels are ignorant of some future events, but that they cause motions on the spirits of men according to what will in probability come to pass.

I am now so stricken in years, as that I am indisposed to travell, and rather desirous to dy where I am. No Question but that Jacob thought that Hee should return again to the Land of Canaan, and that Joseph should outlive him. Gen. 46.4. Whereas that promise was made good to him in that his body was buried in that land, and his posterity returned thither. However, it shall be as to my selfe, I hope my son Samuel will do service for the Name of Christ in England which is in some sort as if I did so. I Chron. 29. 25, 26. And that some Bookes of mine printed there will be serviceable to the Interest of Christs Kingdom.

I have a strange Impression on my spirit that I shall dy shortly. And how great will the mercy be, If I shall be taken out the world before decayes of age render me useless! I long to be in that world in which there is no sin, and where Christ is to be seen in his glory.

For these several years last past, my constant course of walking before the Lord has bin thus, In the morning as soon as in my study (which is usually about 7h.) I read a chapter, and then pray. At 9h I pray with my Family. Presently after dinner I go to God again in my study. When the Evening comes, I go to God again. At 9h I pray with my Family, and return to my study. There again, I go to God the last thing I do before I betake my

selfe to my repose. Oh how good is it, to be frequent in prayer to God! But what are prayers! Christ is All. April. 23. 1703

My Farewill Advice to the Scholars in Cambridge may be seen in my sermon notes. Lib. 82. p. 178, 179.

I have had many thoughts with my selfe about recommending one to this church to be my Successor, when the Lord shall have taken me from them. It is not every one that will be sutable for so considerable a congregation. The young Scholars in New England are too generally not so well affected to the Platform of church discipline as were to be desired. Also, they have a lazy way of reading all their sermons. Nor can I think of any one of them, whom I can judge so proper for to be my sons Colleague in the pastoral office, as his brother Samuel, whom God has graciously blessed with good accomplishments both as to natural and acquired abilities: And of whom I have received a great character from Mr Alsop, and mr Howe and others in England. On which account as Samuel Mather (my brother) was a preacher in this North end of the Town before me, and indeed the first preacher here, so I could wish that Samuel Mather my son may succeed me, And accordingly I will leave it as my serious and dying Advice to this church, that they would take it into their serious consideration.

Since I wrote this the brethren (above 100 of them) have invited my Samuel to return to them. But he is not inclined. Nor would I again urge it.

Decbr. 16. 1704.

January. 1. 1708/9. Is this the first day of that year in which I am to dye and to go into the eternal world! Oh, blessed be God if it be so! If I dye quickly some few will Lament my death. Whereas if I live awhile longer, age will make me useless. It is a great mercy for a minister not to outlive his work.

Let me begin this year as I would dy, viz. with deep humiliation, and prayer with Fasting before the Lord. Begging for the

pardon of all the sins I have been guilty of since I came into the world: In all places where I have bin: And as to every Relation Sustained by me. Begging that I may perfect Holiness, and that my last dayes may be my best. Begging that his presence may be with me in private meditations, and in publick ministrations. Begging that those Talents of understanding and memory may in the vigor of them, be continued to me, with an Heart to improve them to the utmost for Gods glory. Begging that the blessing of God may be on my Family: not only on my children, but my childrens children, when I am taken away from them all.

All for Christs sake.

Now my purpose is (if the Lord will) to spend the few dayes I have to live in the world, in preaching on such subjects as I shall judge will be most for the good of souls. In reading Histories, especially lives: And practical Bookes. And in meditations on death, Heaven, The immortality of the soul, The Resurrection, and eternity. Oh! that before I go hence I might hear that God has appeared for his oppressed protestant people in France, and against the bloody court, and bloody clergy in that Kingdom.

And now, Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee. Deliver me from all my Transgressions. Hear my prayer O Lord, and give ear to my cry. Hold not thi peace at my tears.

June. 21. 1709. This is my sinfull birth day. I am this day 70 years old. I set it apart before the Lord.

1. With Fasting and Supplications to confess and mourn for all the sins of my life past, in every place where I have bin, and as to every Relation sustained by me. And to mourn exceedingly in that I have done so little good in the world notwithstanding I have bin this day 70 years in it.

2. Considering that I feele my selfe under decays by age, so that I am not like to do service for Christ and for his people if I should live much longer because the infirmities of age will grow upon me, I pray with humble submission to the will of God, that this may be my last sinfull birth day, and that I may be among the spirits of just men made perfect before the year is expired.

3. If that may not be, my humble prayer is, That my abilities for Service may not faile me in my old age, In special that my understanding and memory may be continued, but that I may know wherein I may be most serviceable now I am going out of the world.

4. That God will take care of, and bless my Family and children and childrens children after I am gone from them, according to Gen. 25.11. Psal. 112.2. Prov. 20.7.

5. That this church and congregation may be blessed with a Faithfull and able Teacher, to assist my son in the work of the gospell. For if he should be left alone for any long Time the Burden will be too heavy for him.

6. That God will hasten the accomplishment of the glorious things which are to be fullfilled in the Last dayes. Let the Hearer of prayer say Amen!

June. 2. 1711.

This day I set apart to be spent in my study in prayes and Thanksgivings to God, in that I have through his good hand upon me, finished those meditations on the heavenly world, which I was desirous to accomplish before my death.²⁷

But I would moreover take this occasion to bless the Lord for all his wonderful goodness towards me a most sinfull creature, throughout the whole course of my life.

It is a mercy to be descended from godly parents and Ancestors. My Father was an eminent minister of Christ. My mother a singularly pious and prudent woman. So was my Grandmother Holt, and I know not how many of my uncles and Aunts and other near Relations of my mother. It is a mercy to be related to those who are the children of God. I bless the Lord, that it has bin so with me. 4 of my Fathers sons have bin employed in the work of the ministry. I am the least of them. I bless the Lord for his preventing grace in awakening my Conscience, and causing me to repent and turn from sin, and give my selfe to Christ about 56 years ago when I was but 15 years old.

²⁷ *Meditations of the Glory of the Heavenly World* (Boston, 1711).

I bless the Lord, for my liberal education which has bin in more universities or Colledges than one. His good providence carried me to England and Ireland when I was 18 years old, and detained me in those parts of the earth 4 years, and preserved me in all my voyages travels and Journeyings both by sea and Land, and made my travels a great mercy to me, blessing me in my youth with special advantages to do as well as to get good. God kept me from conforming and complying with the iniquity of the Times, and after 4 years were expired returned me to New England again, and (which I often prayed that it might be so) gave me to find my Father alive, and to enjoy the comfort of an happy society with him for the space of 8 years, often preaching for him; and my Father sometimes preached in this congregation for me. An happiness which none of my brothers enjoyed.

I bless the Lord, for his providence in casting my Lot to be in Boston, and among a praying people who have ever had a great Love for me now for the space of near 50 years, and have bin importunate in their prayers for me especially when I have bin visited with dangerous sickness (as 3 times I have bin) or in danger by the wrath of wicked men persecuting me, as under Sr Edmund Andros his Government they did.

I bless the Lord, in that he has employed me in the work of the ministry, And has blessed me with a large and choice library, which has bin a great help to my being serviceable to the Interest of Truth, and of the Lords Kingdom, which without the help of Books to enlighten me with Knowledge I could not have bin.

I bless the Lord, in that Hee has favored me with great opportunities of doing service for him. In the pulpit and that in very many congregations occasionally in both Englands: And by the press not only in Boston, but in London, Scotland, Amsterdam, Utrick where some poor writings of mine have bin printed, with some of them translated into other languages.

I have moreover through the gracious providence of God bin favoured with an oportunity of being serviceable to the churches of New England in respect of the Colledge at Cambridge. The Inspection and presidency of that society was devolved on me

in the year 1681, and not resigned by me untill 1701. So that I have had a long oportunity to endeavor that the young Scholars might be seasnd with principles of Truth, and with the fear of God. Some of them told me that they shall never forgett the Instruction which they received from me. The good providence of God has also improved me in an Agency at the Court of England in the behalfe of New England And gave me a frequent Access unto two Kings, and a Queen, and to many of the Nobility, and other persons of Quality and Interest, to sollicit them for New England. And he made me Instrumental (I humbly bless his Name) in obtaining some great and peculiar priviledges for his people in this land.

I bless the Lord, in that he has bin gracious to me in respect of my Family Relations. Has given me a Loving wife, and has continued her with me for a Jubilee of years, which is a rare mercy. Has given me by her 7 daughters, 3 of which are (as I have cause to beleeve) now *with* Christ, and I hope the other 4 yet surviving are *in* Christ. But especially I have cause to bless the Lord for my 3 sons. My son Nathaniel was a youth of more than ordinary Learning and piety, and his life has bin printed and reprinted at London 3 times, and many edified thereby. My son Cotton is Joyned with me in the work of the ministry, and has bin for more than 30 years, and God has made him a great blessing, not only to his Fathers Family but flock also, and made use of him in many singular services, and has given him a name and respect in other Lands, in Scotland especially, as throughout New England. God has bin very gracious to me likewise, in my son Samuel whom he has blessed with both natural and acquired parts, and accepted him also in the work of the ministry, and made use of him in writing as well as preaching, and I hear that he is greatly respected in diverse parts of England, where he is known.

I bless the Lord, in that he has given me to live to a great old age (for I am this moneth 72) and that he has made it to be a good old age, since I have enjoyed much health therein, and bin kept from painfull diseases. Some touches of the gout several

times I have bin afflicted with, but they have bin very gentle ones, and not of long continuance.

I bless the Lord, in that he has continued to me my understanding and memory, which have not utterly nor considerably failed me in my old age hitherto. A mercy which I have prayed for thousands of times the Lord knows. And shall I not now pour out my soul in prayes and Thanksgivings to the God and giver of all these blessings?

I bless the Lord, in that Hee has graciously and wonderfully provided for me in my Family, and ofttimes in unexpected wayes, and by such hands as I have least thought of.

If ever there was man in the world that had cause to be thankful, I am Hee.

Bless the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy Name! Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!

Since the motion to my son Samuel Desiring his return to New England in order to his being my Successor has failed, I have had many thoughts about recommending another. I believe mr Joseph Sewall will be a blessing to them, in case the Lord shall incline their hearts to him. I am sollicitous lest the Relations of [name crossed out] should make a Schism in the church on his account. His behavior has bin so Scandalous not only before but since his being joined to this church, and his folly in an aping imitation first of my son, then of mr Coleman, and after that of mr Pemberton has given me great dissatisfaction concerning him. But especially his associating with, and taking delight in vain persons (as I understand that hee does) makes me fear that his heart is not right in the sight of God. I do therefore leave it as my solemn and dying Advice to this church, that they do not call that young man to be my Successor. December 1. 1711

March. 31. 1714. March. 25. 1715.

Now I hope theres no fear of wrath [~~line crossed out~~] A fitter place for him than Boston. August. 22. 1716.

The year 1713 has bin troublesome on occasion of a new meeting house which some desired might be built in the North end of Boston. I declared that if they would set their meeting house in a place convenient for the prosperity of this end of the town, I would not only consent but contribute 10 li towards it, and would do all for them that a Father could do for his children. This I suppose is more than can be sayd of any other minister in New England. At the same time, I told them that if they set it in a place spoken of too near the other meeting house, I would have nothing to do with them. Some of them that came to me in the name of all the rest, promised me they would not do it, if grievous to me, nevertheless they do it. I am perswaded that a blasting from God will be upon them first or last. June. 20. 1713.

On April 4. 1714, the Lord saw meet to take from me my wife, who had bin the dear companion of my pilgrimage for more than 52 years. God made her a great blessing to me. By her hee gave me ten children, 3 sons and Seven daughters. My sons have all of them, bin an honor to their Fathers name, and which is a thousand times better an honor to Religion. I have also had Comfort in my daughters, who have bin dutifull to me and I hope they fear God. Their dear mother was of a very loving tender disposition. I kept close to my Study, and committed the management of the affairs of the Family to her. When I have bin absent from my Family, I was easy in my spirit, because my heart did Safely trust in her, who did me good and not evill all the dayes of her life. She was alwayes very carefull not to do any thing which she thought would trouble me. Her honor for me was too great. For She has sayd to many, that She thought I was the best Husband, and the best man in the whole world. I often prayed that She might outlive me. But in mercy to her God ordered it to be otherwise.

On April. 13. 1715, the ministers of this province mett in Boston by their delegates, and unanimously desired that I would under-

take a voyage for England, with an Address from them to the King, praying his Royal favor to these Churches. I declared my self willing to go, in case the church to which I am related would consent, but when it was proposed to them, every one of the Church lifted up his hand against it. So that I could not See my call clear notwithstanding the great desire I have had to do some Service for Christ in England once more before I dye. I am now like to dy in New England, whereas 2 months ago I was like to dy in England. My Times are in Gods hands; and it is good for me to be where he would have me be. June 17. 1715.

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